

Deuteronomy

S T U D Y G U I D E

FALL SESSION 2023



Written by Alex McGraw and Julie Partridge

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Deuteronomy Study Guide - Fall Session 2023

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At Riv, we invite everyone to know and enjoy Jesus
as we stumble together in our pursuit to love like Him.

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Schedule

Week	Date	Topic	Location	Session Complete
1	Sept. 20	Introduction	Westside	
2	Sept. 27	Deuteronomy 1	Westside	
3	Oct. 4	Deuteronomy 2-3	Westside	
4	Oct. 11	Deuteronomy 4:1-43	Westside	
5	Oct. 18	Deuteronomy 4:44-6:9	Westside	
6	Oct. 25	Deuteronomy 6:10-7:26	Westside	
7	Nov. 1	Deuteronomy 8:1-9:6	Westside	
8	Nov. 8	Deuteronomy 9:7-10:22	Westside	
Winter Break				
9	Jan. 17	Deuteronomy 11	Holt	
10	Jan. 24	Deuteronomy 12-14	Holt	
11	Jan. 31	Deuteronomy 15:1-16:17	Holt	
12	Feb. 7	Deuteronomy 16:18-18:22	Holt	
13	Feb. 14	Deuteronomy 19-20	Holt	
14	Feb. 21	Deuteronomy 21-22	Holt	
15	Feb. 28	Deuteronomy 23-24	Holt	
16	Mar. 6	Deuteronomy 25-26	Holt	
Spring Break				
17	Apr. 10	Deuteronomy 27	REO Town	
18	Apr. 17	Deuteronomy 28	REO Town	
19	Apr. 24	Deuteronomy 29-30	REO Town	
20	May 1	Deuteronomy 31	REO Town	
21	May 8	Deuteronomy 32	REO Town	
22	May 15	Deuteronomy 33-34	REO Town	



WEEK 1:

Introduction to Deuteronomy

Who wrote it:

“Deuteronomy” is translated from Latin as “the second Law.” However, the original Hebrew title *Debarim* comes from the first words of the book in 1:1, “These are the words”. Deuteronomy can be properly understood as Moses’ recounting and understanding of the Law in the final book of the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Hebrew Bible. Presumably, the final verses of Deuteronomy were spoken by Joshua since verse 34:5 records the death of Moses which most likely occurred in 1406 B.C.

When was it written:

Deuteronomy was written over a 40-day span as the new generation of Israelites stood ready to conquer and possess the Promised Land. The first sermon was given on the 1st of the 11th month in the 40th year after their exodus from Egypt (1:3).

Why was it written:

The new generation of Israelites that was about to enter the Promised Land had not witnessed the miraculous rescue from Egypt nor had they heard the Law given at Mt. Sinai. Moses seeks to anchor their love and obedience to YAHWEH as he restates and expands the Law for this new generation. Moses is reviewing the experiences of the past and spotlighting God’s faithfulness. He reminds them of God’s expectations of obedience while revealing what the future will hold as they give or divide their sole allegiance to YAHWEH.

Summary:

In the first five books of the Bible, also called the Torah, one of the things God is doing is rewriting the cognitive environment that saturates the Israelites’ beliefs and values. He does this through first recalibrating the Israelites’ understanding of creation, worship, human dignity, and covenant language. The Israelites have been enslaved in Egypt for over 400 years, completely immersed in the Egyptian belief system. They now stand in a period of transition as God forms them into his covenantal people and declares them as His treasured possession. On either side of the Israelites’ story- either as foreigners in Egypt or as they reclaim the land of Canaan- they are surrounded by a polytheistic culture that could sink its teeth into them at every turn. Over the forty years that the Israelites spent in the desert before entering Canaan, God set out to remove the reproach of Egypt from them and prepare them for the journey ahead.

In simplified terms, a **covenant** is when two parties enter a relationship where the terms are mutually agreed upon. This was common practice in the ancient Near East as different empires bartered with rival nations in geopolitical strategies. It was always marked with a sign by a divine witness. Specifically, through what was called a suzerain vassal treaty, weaker nations

would be taken under the wing of and protected by stronger nations as they obeyed the terms that were enacted within the covenant. When God formed a covenant with the Israelites, they recognized it as a vassal treaty. The extraordinary part of God entering this relationship with the Israelites is that he is the divine witness and the suzerain representative, meaning he is the stronger party taking the responsibility unto himself. Broadly speaking, covenant within the Bible “becomes a way of speaking of all of life in subordination to a loving god. As such, it can serve as a model for all Christian thinking, including ethical thinking. More importantly it reveals the unfathomable depth of the love of God, who endures a profound inner conflict for the sake of sustaining his relationship with his people”*. Simply put, we serve a loving God who takes the weight of sustaining the relationship onto Himself. Sound familiar? Right, it’s not just a New Testament theme! This permeates the Old Testament, but it never comes without responsibility on our behalf. As God’s people, He holds us to a high standard as we participate in His redemptive plan.

Deuteronomy is written in the context of a new generation of Israelites that is about to embark into a Promised Land they’ve only ever heard about. They have traveled the desert as a community and seen God’s power in action through the pillar of fire by day and the cloud of smoke by night. They have witnessed countless battles where God has triumphed against all odds. They know what it means to live in this wilderness envisioned as a testing ground of faith. And yet, Moses, in his final moments, once again calls their attention to the magnitude of God. It’s almost as if God knows our fickle hearts that are prone to wander and forget. It was easier to take the Israelites out of Egypt than to “take Egypt out of the Israelites” (hearts and minds).

There are two main themes that pervade the book of Deuteronomy: remembering the faithfulness of God and loving God holistically. These truths ring true for us today as we live out our faith to a watching world. As Moses calls the Israelites to remember the miraculous power of YAHWEH, He also aims to orient their hearts to their Maker as they step into a hostile culture to reclaim their land. While this book is filled with prescriptive language (language that prescribes for or instructs the Israelites what to do) to the Israelites in a specific cognitive environment within history, we must also remember that the relatability, accuracy, and importance of Scripture transcends time and culture. We too are called to remember God’s faithful covenantal love, or hesed, and anchor our hearts and devotion to him alone!

Throughout this study, remember to adore God who not only spoke to us in a language we can understand as He shared his heart and requirements of obedience– but also used this book to point His people’s hearts forward to Jesus Christ, the Author and Perfecter of our faith.

* McConville, Gordon J. *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis*. Zondervan. 1997, page 753.



WEEK 2:

Deuteronomy 1

1 These are the words Moses spoke to all Israel across the Jordan in the wilderness, in the Arabah opposite Suph, between Paran and Tophel, Laban, Hazeroth, and Di-zahab. ² It is an eleven-day journey from Horeb to Kadesh-barnea by way of Mount Seir. ³ In the fortieth year, in the eleventh month, on the first of the month, Moses told the Israelites everything the Lord had commanded him to say to them. ⁴ This was after he had defeated King Sihon of the Amorites, who lived in Heshbon, and King Og of Bashan, who lived in Ashtaroth, at Edrei. ⁵ Across the Jordan in the land of Moab, Moses began to explain this law, saying:

⁶ “The Lord our God spoke to us at Horeb: ‘You have stayed at this mountain long enough. ⁷ Resume your journey and go to the hill country of the Amorites and their neighbors in the Arabah, the hill country, the Judean foothills, the Negev and the sea coast—to the land of the Canaanites and to Lebanon as far as the great river, the Euphrates River. ⁸ See, I have set the land before you. Enter and take possession of the land the Lord swore to give to your ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and their future descendants.’

⁹ “I said to you at that time: I can’t bear the responsibility for you on my own. ¹⁰ The Lord your God has so multiplied you that today you are as numerous as the stars of the sky. ¹¹ May the Lord, the God of your ancestors, increase you a thousand times more, and bless you as he promised you. ¹² But how can I bear your troubles, burdens, and disputes by myself? ¹³ Appoint for yourselves wise, understanding, and respected men from each of your tribes, and I will make them your leaders.

¹⁴ “You replied to me, ‘What you propose to do is good.’

¹⁵ “So I took the leaders of your tribes, wise and respected men, and set them over you as leaders: commanders for thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens, and officers for your tribes. ¹⁶ I commanded your judges at that time: Hear the cases between your brothers, and judge rightly between a man and his brother or his resident alien. ¹⁷ Do not show partiality when deciding a case; listen to small and great alike. Do not be intimidated by anyone, for judgment belongs to God. Bring me any case too difficult for you, and I will hear it. ¹⁸ At that time I commanded you about all the things you were to do.

¹⁹ “We then set out from Horeb and went across all the great and terrible wilderness you saw on the way to the hill country of the Amorites, just as the Lord our God had commanded us. When we reached Kadesh-barnea, ²⁰ I said to you: You have reached the hill country of the Amorites, which the Lord our God is giving us. ²¹ See, the Lord your God has set the land before you. Go up and take possession of it as the Lord, the God of your ancestors, has told you. Do not be afraid or discouraged.

²² “Then all of you approached me and said, ‘Let’s send men ahead of us, so that they may explore the land for us and bring us back a report about the route we should go up and the cities we will come to.’ ²³ The plan seemed good to me, so I selected twelve men from among you, one man for each tribe. ²⁴ They left and went up into the hill country and came to Eshcol Valley, scouting the land. ²⁵ They took some of the fruit from the land

in their hands, carried it down to us, and brought us back a report: 'The land the Lord our God is giving us is good.'

²⁶ "But you were not willing to go up. You rebelled against the command of the Lord your God. ²⁷ You grumbled in your tents and said, 'The Lord brought us out of the land of Egypt to hand us over to the Amorites in order to destroy us, because he hates us. ²⁸ Where can we go? Our brothers have made us lose heart, saying: The people are larger and taller than we are; the cities are large, fortified to the heavens. We also saw the descendants of the Anakim there.'

²⁹ "So I said to you: Don't be terrified or afraid of them! ³⁰ The Lord your God who goes before you will fight for you, just as you saw him do for you in Egypt. ³¹ And you saw in the wilderness how the Lord your God carried you as a man carries his son all along the way you traveled until you reached this place. ³² But in spite of this you did not trust the Lord your God, ³³ who went before you on the journey to seek out a place for you to camp. He went in the fire by night and in the cloud by day to guide you on the road you were to travel.

³⁴ "When the Lord heard your words, he grew angry and swore an oath: ³⁵ 'None of these men in this evil generation will see the good land I swore to give your ancestors, ³⁶ except Caleb the son of Jephunneh. He will see it, and I will give him and his descendants the land on which he has set foot, because he remained loyal to the Lord.'

³⁷ "The Lord was angry with me also because of you and said, 'You will not enter there

either. ³⁸ Joshua son of Nun, who attends you, will enter it. Encourage him, for he will enable Israel to inherit it. ³⁹ Your children, who you said would be plunder, your sons who don't yet know good from evil, will enter there. I will give them the land, and they will take possession of it. ⁴⁰ But you are to turn back and head for the wilderness by way of the Red Sea.'

⁴¹ "You answered me, 'We have sinned against the Lord. We will go up and fight just as the Lord our God commanded us.' Then each of you put on his weapons of war and thought it would be easy to go up into the hill country.

⁴² "But the Lord said to me, 'Tell them: Don't go up and fight, for I am not with you to keep you from being defeated by your enemies.'

⁴³ So I spoke to you, but you didn't listen. You rebelled against the Lord's command and defiantly went up into the hill country.

⁴⁴ Then the Amorites who lived there came out against you and chased you like a swarm of bees. They routed you from Seir as far as Hormah. ⁴⁵ When you returned, you wept before the Lord, but he didn't listen to your requests or pay attention to you. ⁴⁶ For this reason you stayed in Kadesh as long as you did.

Things to ponder:

Summarize the passage in your own words:

What questions do you have?

Deuteronomy 1:1-5

Why did the narrator find these events important to mention as Israel prepares to enter Canaan?

These stories took place in real locations at a specific time in history. How does looking over a map help you understand the passage better? (see map in the Resource section)

Deuteronomy 1:6-18

Read Exodus 18. How does this story give context to the Deuteronomy passage?

Why did Moses find it important to retell this process?

How does Moses' retelling of this process differ from the original?

What would Moses' words in 1:10 mean to Israel? (See Gen. 15:5)

What characteristics do you find important in leaders within the Church? What requirements does God have of those leaders?

Deuteronomy 1:19-46

Read Numbers 13-14. How does it differ from the Deuteronomy recap?

God's sovereignty is on full display in this first chapter of Deuteronomy. Define this term and explain how this attribute would bring comfort to Israel.

Write down what you think and feel as you understand what this means about God. Is there resistance? Comfort? Delight?

What led to God's righteous anger? What was God asking of the people?

When have you been plagued with fear and found yourself unwilling to step out of comfort and into faith?

What principle can be taken from these passages that you could apply to your life today?

As You Go:

Write out a prayer for the week ahead based on what you've learned this week.

Reflections:

The very first verse is spoken from the perspective of the narrator. Notice how this story is being told from within the Promised Land, west of the Jordan River, yet is a transcription of the sermons delivered within the wilderness.

Deuteronomy begins by recounting the desert wanderings of the Israelites and showcasing God's provision. He first tells the victories of battles fought to the East of the Jordan against well-known kings such as Og and Sihon. This land was bountiful and coveted and the Lord granted victory to the Israelites as God reminded them not to be afraid since the Lord was on their side.

Moses then speaks about the importance of the judicial system that has been put in place so that people's needs are met. Notice the character traits leaders should embody: wisdom, understanding, and respect. The role of the leader was important as it set the tone for the community. There is to be no partiality even among foreigners who have made their way into the camp. The Law that was given to Moses at Sinai encapsulates the idea of caring for the widow, orphan, and refugee. No one is supposed to live in excess as the needs of their community struggle. God graciously provides and expects them to use their resources to care for others.

Finally, Moses reminds the people of why they have been in the desert for 40 years. In Numbers 13-14, God commanded the people to take possession of the Promised Land, yet they chose spies to get a better understanding of the land they were about to conquer. After their 40-day journey to see what people and produce the land held, ten of the spies rallied the people in fear as they had decided the obstacles of the mission were too much to bear. But the plan of their journey had been to determine how to conquer the land, not whether or not to do it at all. Their lack of trust and saturation of fear inhibited their obedience and their opportunity to enjoy a long-awaited promise.

Caleb and Joshua considered the past faithfulness of God and were willing to trust his provision. As Moses bargained with God to not destroy the Israelites, God agreed to save only Caleb, Joshua, and those who were under the age of twenty. Moses is retelling this story of rebellion to remind the new generation of past mistakes. He is shining light on the truth of why this generation has grown up as shepherds in the wilderness with the Promised Land just out of reach.

The first chapter of Deuteronomy sets the stage for its purpose. While it is important to remember the past and the consequences of disobedience, it is equally powerful to remember God's unchanging character and faithfulness. Just as the Israelites are to listen to God's voice and embody His character, we too turn our ears and hearts to God as he drives out our fears and uncertainties. It was one thing for the Israelites to witness God's power in the wilderness and experience His protection and guidance, but it was another thing to trust that power, protection, and guidance in situations that seemed difficult and hopeless.



WEEK 3:

Deuteronomy 2-3

2 “Then we turned back and headed for the wilderness by way of the Red Sea, as the Lord had told me, and we traveled around the hill country of Seir for many days. **2** The Lord then said to me, **3** ‘You’ve been traveling around this hill country long enough; turn north. **4** Command the people: You are about to travel through the territory of your brothers, the descendants of Esau, who live in Seir. They will be afraid of you, so be very careful. **5** Don’t provoke them, for I will not give you any of their land, not even a foot of it, because I have given Esau the hill country of Seir as his possession. **6** You may purchase food from them, so that you may eat, and buy water from them to drink. **7** For the Lord your God has blessed you in all the work of your hands. He has watched over your journey through this immense wilderness. The Lord your God has been with you these past forty years, and you have lacked nothing.’

8 “So we bypassed our brothers, the descendants of Esau, who live in Seir. We turned away from the Arabah road and from Elath and Ezion-geber. We traveled along the road to the Wilderness of Moab. **9** The Lord said to me, ‘Show no hostility toward Moab, and do not provoke them to battle, for I will not give you any of their land as a possession, since I have given Ar as a possession to the descendants of Lot.’”

10 The Emim, a great and numerous people as tall as the Anakim, had previously lived there.

11 They were also regarded as Rephaim, like the Anakim, though the Moabites called them Emim. **12** The Horites had previously lived in Seir, but the descendants of Esau drove them out, destroying them completely and settling

in their place, just as Israel did in the land of its possession the Lord gave them.

13 “The Lord said, ‘Now get up and cross the Zered Valley.’ So we crossed the Zered Valley.

14 The time we spent traveling from Kadesh-barnea until we crossed the Zered Valley was thirty-eight years until the entire generation of fighting men had perished from the camp, as the Lord had sworn to them. **15** Indeed, the Lord’s hand was against them, to eliminate them from the camp until they had all perished.

16 “When all the fighting men had died among the people, **17** the Lord spoke to me, **18** ‘Today you are going to cross the border of Moab at Ar.

19 When you get close to the Ammonites, don’t show any hostility to them or provoke them, for I will not give you any of the Ammonites’ land as a possession; I have given it as a possession to the descendants of Lot.’”

20 This too used to be regarded as the land of the Rephaim. The Rephaim lived there previously, though the Ammonites called them Zamzumim, **21** a great and numerous people, tall as the Anakim. The Lord destroyed the Rephaim at the advance of the Ammonites, so that they drove them out and settled in their place. **22** This was just as he had done for the descendants of Esau who lived in Seir, when he destroyed the Horites before them; they drove them out and have lived in their place until now. **23** The Caphtorim, who came from Caphtor, destroyed the Avvites, who lived in villages as far as Gaza, and settled in their place.

24 “The Lord also said, ‘Get up, move out, and cross the Arnon Valley. See, I have handed the Amorites’ King Sihon of Heshbon and his land over to you. Begin to take possession of

it; engage him in battle. ²⁵ Today I will begin to put the fear and dread of you on the peoples everywhere under heaven. They will hear the report about you, tremble, and be in anguish because of you.’

²⁶ “So I sent messengers with an offer of peace to King Sihon of Heshbon from the Wilderness of Kedemoth, saying, ²⁷ ‘Let us travel through your land; we will keep strictly to the highway. We will not turn to the right or the left. ²⁸ You can sell us food in exchange for silver so we may eat, and give us water for silver so we may drink. Only let us travel through on foot, ²⁹ just as the descendants of Esau who live in Seir did for us, and the Moabites who live in Ar, until we cross the Jordan into the land the Lord our God is giving us.’ ³⁰ But King Sihon of Heshbon would not let us travel through his land, for the Lord your God had made his spirit stubborn and his heart obstinate in order to hand him over to you, as has now taken place.

³¹ “Then the Lord said to me, ‘See, I have begun to give Sihon and his land to you. Begin to take possession of it.’ ³² So Sihon and his whole army came out against us for battle at Jahaz. ³³ The Lord our God handed him over to us, and we defeated him, his sons, and his whole army. ³⁴ At that time we captured all his cities and completely destroyed the people of every city, including the women and children. We left no survivors. ³⁵ We took only the livestock and the spoil from the cities we captured as plunder for ourselves. ³⁶ There was no city that was inaccessible to us, from Aroer on the rim of the Arnon Valley, along with the city in the valley, even as far as Gilead. The Lord our God gave everything to us. ³⁷ But you did not go near the Ammonites’ land, all along the bank of the Jabbok River, the cities of the hill country, or any place that the Lord our God had forbidden.

3 “Then we turned and went up the road to Bashan, and King Og of Bashan came out against us with his whole army to do battle at Edrei. ² But the Lord said to me, ‘Do not fear him, for I have handed him over to you along with his whole army and his land. Do to him as you did to King Sihon of the Amorites, who lived in Heshbon.’ ³ So the Lord our God also handed over King Og of Bashan and his whole army to us. We struck him until there was no survivor left. ⁴ We captured all his cities at that time. There wasn’t a city that we didn’t take from them: sixty cities, the entire region of Argob, the kingdom of Og in Bashan. ⁵ All these were fortified with high walls, gates, and bars, besides a large number of rural villages. ⁶ We completely destroyed them, as we had done to King Sihon of Heshbon, destroying the men, women, and children of every city. ⁷ But we took all the livestock and the spoil from the cities as plunder for ourselves.

⁸ “At that time we took the land from the two Amorite kings across the Jordan, from the Arnon Valley as far as Mount Hermon, ⁹ which the Sidonians call Sirion, but the Amorites call Senir, ¹⁰ all the cities of the plateau, Gilead, and Bashan as far as Salecah and Edrei, cities of Og’s kingdom in Bashan. ¹¹ (Only King Og of Bashan was left of the remnant of the Rephaim. His bed was made of iron. Isn’t it in Rabbah of the Ammonites? It is 13½ feet long and 6 feet wide by a standard measure.)

¹² “At that time we took possession of this land. I gave to the Reubenites and Gadites the area extending from Aroer by the Arnon Valley, and half the hill country of Gilead along with its cities. ¹³ I gave to half the tribe of Manasseh the rest of Gilead and all Bashan, the kingdom

of Og. The entire region of Argob, the whole territory of Bashan, used to be called the land of the Rephaim. ¹⁴ Jair, a descendant of Manasseh, took over the entire region of Argob as far as the border of the Geshurites and Maacathites. He called Bashan by his own name, Jair's Villages, as it is today. ¹⁵ I gave Gilead to Machir, ¹⁶ and I gave to the Reubenites and Gadites the area extending from Gilead to the Arnon Valley (the middle of the valley was the border) and up to the Jabbok River, the border of the Ammonites. ¹⁷ The Arabah and Jordan are also borders from Chinnereth as far as the Sea of the Arabah, the Dead Sea, under the slopes of Pisgah on the east.

¹⁸ "I commanded you at that time: The Lord your God has given you this land to possess. All your valiant men will cross over in battle formation ahead of your brothers the Israelites. ¹⁹ But your wives, dependents, and livestock—I know that you have a lot of livestock—will remain in the cities I have given you ²⁰ until the Lord gives rest to your brothers as he has to you, and they also take possession of the land the Lord your God is giving them across the Jordan. Then each of you may return to his possession that I have given you.

²¹ "I commanded Joshua at that time: Your own eyes have seen everything the Lord your God has done to these two kings. The Lord will do the same to all the kingdoms you are about to enter. ²² Don't be afraid of them, for the Lord your God fights for you.

²³ "At that time I begged the Lord: ²⁴ Lord God, you have begun to show your greatness and your strong hand to your servant, for what god is there in heaven or on earth who can perform deeds and mighty acts like yours? ²⁵ Please let

me cross over and see the beautiful land on the other side of the Jordan, that good hill country and Lebanon.

²⁶ "But the Lord was angry with me because of you and would not listen to me. The Lord said to me, 'That's enough! Do not speak to me again about this matter. ²⁷ Go to the top of Pisgah and look to the west, north, south, and east, and see it with your own eyes, for you will not cross the Jordan. ²⁸ But commission Joshua and encourage and strengthen him, for he will cross over ahead of the people and enable them to inherit this land that you will see.' ²⁹ So we stayed in the valley facing Beth-peor.

Things to ponder:

Summarize the passage in your own words:

What questions do you have?

Deuteronomy 2:1-23

What stands out to you as you read about Israel's journey?

Compare Moses's words in 2:1-8 with the description of this same encounter in Numbers 20:14-21.

What do you know about Esau and Lot? (skim Genesis 12:1-14:16, 18:16-19:38, and 25:19-34 for help). Why would God still honor them when neither family line was included among God's chosen people?

What might you be thinking or feeling if you were one of the older generation with "the Lord's hand against you"? What if you were one of the younger generation waiting to enter the Promised Land?

Consider a time when your sin had a negative impact on another person, or when someone else's sin had a negative impact on you. What does this teach you about sin?

Deuteronomy 2:24-3:7

What stands out to you as you read about these first two battles?

Why would God cause someone to oppose and fight against His people even when He told them what to do and promised them victory? What might God's purpose be in allowing opposition in our lives?

What are your questions or thoughts about Israel completely defeating the nations they encountered?

What happened when Israel put their faith in God for these battles? How have you seen God fight for you in your own life, and how has this grown your faith?

Deuteronomy 3:8-29

What stands out to you as you read about the final preparations before Israel entered Canaan?

In what ways did Moses prepare the nation of Israel to enter Canaan together under new leadership?

What are your thoughts about God refusing to allow Moses to enter the Promised Land? What might God's refusal teach us about Him and His character?

Reflections:

Moses summarizes decades of wilderness wanderings with these words in Deuteronomy 2:1 – “... we traveled around the hill country of Seir for many days” and fast-forwards to the time when God moved the nation of Israel to the Promised Land. Moses reminds Israel how God had directed them as they crossed lands occupied by the descendants of Lot and Esau, and he reminds them that God would continue to go with them into Canaan. God Himself is the driving force of this narrative - God would put fear and dread of Israel on peoples everywhere, God delivered King Sihon and then King Og and their land to Israel.

God instructed Israel to take no survivors and to destroy every man, woman, and child in the cities they conquered. To understand why God would require such brutal actions, we must remember that these were wicked people who had rejected the one true God. The ancestors of these nations included Abraham, Lot, and Esau, who all had knowledge of the one true God but somehow the truth about Him was not passed on to or embraced by subsequent generations. These nations also knew about Israel’s God through the stories of His mighty acts in delivering Israel from slavery in Egypt and providing for Israel all the years they wandered in the wilderness. Despite having some knowledge of the God of Israel, these nations rejected Him in favor of their own pagan gods. God preserved these nations for a time, but when their sin had “reached its full measure” (see Genesis 15:16), God worked through Israel to end the wickedness of these nations and to remove their influence.

Moses addressed two specific issues related to Israel’s advance into Canaan. First, the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh which had already been allotted land on the east side of the Jordan River were required to help conquer Canaan with the other tribes. Moses calls them “brothers,” reminding Israel that they are forever connected even if a river divides them. Second, Moses reminds Israel that he would not lead them into Canaan and recounts the transition of leadership from himself to Joshua.

Moses’s words in Deuteronomy 2 and 3 reveal the Lord as central to Israel’s success and lay a foundation for trusting God to be true to His word. God had promised land to Esau and Lot and ensured their descendants maintained that land. He had declared Israel would not enter Canaan until the previous generation had died; He had promised to deliver the lands of King Sihon and King Og to Israel; He had determined Moses would not lead Israel into Canaan. In all these things, God’s word proved true. Because in all these ways the Lord had been true to His word, then Israel could move forward with Him in confidence, trusting God to do everything He said He would do.

Just as the Lord accomplished His plans in delivering Israel to the Promised Land, God’s plans and purposes for His creation and all people will be accomplished. As we put our faith in Him, God will strengthen our hearts with the assurance of His presence, peace, and love.



WEEK 4:

Deuteronomy 4:1-43

4 “Now, Israel, listen to the statutes and ordinances I am teaching you to follow, so that you may live, enter, and take possession of the land the Lord, the God of your ancestors, is giving you. ² You must not add anything to what I command you or take anything away from it, so that you may keep the commands of the Lord your God I am giving you. ³ Your eyes have seen what the Lord did at Baal-peor, for the Lord your God destroyed every one of you who followed Baal of Peor. ⁴ But you who have remained faithful to the Lord your God are all alive today. ⁵ Look, I have taught you statutes and ordinances as the Lord my God has commanded me, so that you may follow them in the land you are entering to possess. ⁶ Carefully follow them, for this will show your wisdom and understanding in the eyes of the peoples. When they hear about all these statutes, they will say, ‘This great nation is indeed a wise and understanding people.’ ⁷ For what great nation is there that has a god near to it as the Lord our God is to us whenever we call to him? ⁸ And what great nation has righteous statutes and ordinances like this entire law I set before you today?

⁹ “Only be on your guard and diligently watch yourselves, so that you don’t forget the things your eyes have seen and so that they don’t slip from your mind as long as you live. Teach them to your children and your grandchildren. ¹⁰ The day you stood before the Lord your God at Horeb, the Lord said to me, ‘Assemble the people before me, and I will let them hear my words, so that they may learn to fear me all the days they live on the earth and may instruct their children.’ ¹¹ You came near and stood at the base of the mountain, a

mountain blazing with fire into the heavens and enveloped in a totally black cloud. ¹² Then the Lord spoke to you from the fire. You kept hearing the sound of the words, but didn’t see a form; there was only a voice. ¹³ He declared his covenant to you. He commanded you to follow the Ten Commandments, which he wrote on two stone tablets. ¹⁴ At that time the Lord commanded me to teach you statutes and ordinances for you to follow in the land you are about to cross into and possess.

¹⁵ “Diligently watch yourselves—because you did not see any form on the day the Lord spoke to you out of the fire at Horeb— ¹⁶ so you don’t act corruptly and make an idol for yourselves in the shape of any figure: a male or female form, ¹⁷ or the form of any animal on the earth, any winged creature that flies in the sky, ¹⁸ any creature that crawls on the ground, or any fish in the waters under the earth. ¹⁹ When you look to the heavens and see the sun, moon, and stars—all the stars in the sky—do not be led astray to bow in worship to them and serve them. The Lord your God has provided them for all people everywhere under heaven. ²⁰ But the Lord selected you and brought you out of Egypt’s iron furnace to be a people for his inheritance, as you are today.

²¹ “The Lord was angry with me on your account. He swore that I would not cross the Jordan and enter the good land the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance. ²² I won’t be crossing the Jordan because I am going to die in this land. But you are about to cross over and take possession of this good land. ²³ Be careful not to forget the covenant of the Lord your God that he made with you, and make an

idol for yourselves in the shape of anything he has forbidden you. ²⁴ For the Lord your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God.

²⁵ “When you have children and grandchildren and have been in the land a long time, and if you act corruptly, make an idol in the form of anything, and do what is evil in the sight of the Lord your God, angering him, ²⁶ I call heaven and earth as witnesses against you today that you will quickly perish from the land you are about to cross the Jordan to possess. You will not live long there, but you will certainly be destroyed. ²⁷ The Lord will scatter you among the peoples, and you will be reduced to a few survivors among the nations where the Lord your God will drive you. ²⁸ There you will worship man-made gods of wood and stone, which cannot see, hear, eat, or smell. ²⁹ But from there, you will search for the Lord your God, and you will find him when you seek him with all your heart and all your soul. ³⁰ When you are in distress and all these things have happened to you, in the future you will return to the Lord your God and obey him. ³¹ He will not leave you, destroy you, or forget the covenant with your ancestors that he swore to them by oath, because the Lord your God is a compassionate God.

³² “Indeed, ask about the earlier days that preceded you, from the day God created mankind on the earth and from one end of the heavens to the other: Has anything like this great event ever happened, or has anything like it been heard of? ³³ Has a people heard God’s voice speaking from the fire as you have, and lived? ³⁴ Or has a god attempted to go and take a nation as his own out of another nation, by trials, signs, wonders, and war, by

a strong hand and an outstretched arm, by great terrors, as the Lord your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes? ³⁵ You were shown these things so that you would know that the Lord is God; there is no other besides him. ³⁶ He let you hear his voice from heaven to instruct you. He showed you his great fire on earth, and you heard his words from the fire. ³⁷ Because he loved your ancestors, he chose their descendants after them and brought you out of Egypt by his presence and great power, ³⁸ to drive out before you nations greater and stronger than you and to bring you in and give you their land as an inheritance, as is now taking place. ³⁹ Today, recognize and keep in mind that the Lord is God in heaven above and on earth below; there is no other. ⁴⁰ Keep his statutes and commands, which I am giving you today, so that you and your children after you may prosper and so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you for all time.”

⁴¹ Then Moses set apart three cities across the Jordan to the east. ⁴² Someone could flee there who committed manslaughter, killing his neighbor accidentally without previously hating him. He could flee to one of these cities and stay alive: ⁴³ Bezer in the wilderness on the plateau land, belonging to the Reubenites; Ramoth in Gilead, belonging to the Gadites; or Golan in Bashan, belonging to the Manassites.

Deuteronomy 4:1-9

What does Moses mean by the word “listen”? What does “listening” look like?

Review Numbers 25 to learn what happened at Baal of Peor.

What can we learn about God from this?

What benefits to following God’s statutes and ordinances does Moses describe for Israel and the surrounding nations?

What blessings do believers miss when we fail to obey the Lord?

(See Psalms 34, Proverbs 3:1-12, or any passage you know to answer this question.)

Deuteronomy 4:10-28

What stands out to you regarding Horeb and how God revealed Himself to Israel?

How was Israel to set themselves apart from the other nations around them?

What surprises you about Moses's words regarding the future of Israel if they act corruptly, and what do Moses's words teach you about God?

What forms does idolatry* take in our lives today, and what consequences do we face for acting corruptly?

* Simply, idolatry is when we divert our devotion and allegiance from God to the gifts that He has given us. Our idolatry plays out in where we place our identity, resources, and attention.

Deuteronomy 4:29-43

What does Moses say is the path back into a loving relationship with God?

We refer to this turning away from sin and turning back to God as repentance. How have you experienced repentance in your own life?

List Israel's experiences which reveal God's mercies to them as a nation. What were God's purposes in these unique circumstances?

How is God's mercy also revealed in the cities of refuge?

When have you experienced the mercy of God in your own life?

Reflections:

After recounting God's faithfulness to Israel and giving evidence of His power, Moses reminds Israel that entering and remaining in this land which had been promised to their ancestor, Abraham, would require their obedience to God's commands. When God set aside Israel as His chosen people, He consistently required their obedience and trust. Moses reminds the people of an incident at Baal-peor in which they did not obey the Lord and therefore faced severe consequences. He speaks not merely to instill fear in the people, but to help Israel recognize the blessings that come from obedience to God's commands. One blessing of obedience is exemplifying God's wisdom in the boundaries and guidelines He established for living.

God had spoken to Israel audibly at Horeb but did not reveal Himself visually. Israel would be surrounded by nations who worshiped idols, so Moses warns Israel against making images of any kind to use in worship. A broader understanding of idolatry would include allowing something or someone else to become more important than God in your life. Even good things can become idols - family, health, work, self-care, volunteer work, and so on. Anything that pushes out our love of God and trust in Him must be identified and put in its proper place. As Moses says to Israel, God is a jealous God. He alone is worthy of all glory, honor, and praise, and He alone deserves our trust and allegiance.

Moses describes the severe consequences of acting corruptly or turning away from God. Israel will lose the land they have waited so long to inhabit, and they will worship idols in place of the one true God. But Moses also describes God's future mercy in welcoming Israel back when they repent of their rebellion and return to the Lord. Moses can confidently say that God will receive them because He had established a covenant with Israel to be their God. He had acted intentionally to reveal Himself to Israel so that they would turn to Him in trust and obedience. God asks His people to obey Him because He is the one true God with unlimited power. His desire is to bless Israel in the land He is giving them.

Deuteronomy 4:39 is a good summary of this passage: "Today, recognize and keep in mind that the Lord is God in heaven above and on earth below; there is no other." In the same way Moses calls Israel to remember the greatness of their God that they might live in obedience to Him in the land they are about to inhabit, we are also called to remember. In marking God's blessings and evidence of His work in our lives, we prepare ourselves in advance to walk through the unknown and challenging situations we have yet to face. God created us for relationship with Him, and He has made Himself accessible to us. Living in relationship with this God of heaven and earth involves loving obedience to His Word as well as intentional reflection on past situations in which God has demonstrated His power, faithfulness, and mercy.



WEEK 5:

Deuteronomy 4:44-6:9

⁴⁴ This is the law Moses gave the Israelites. ⁴⁵ These are the decrees, statutes, and ordinances Moses proclaimed to them after they came out of Egypt, ⁴⁶ across the Jordan in the valley facing Beth-peor in the land of King Sihon of the Amorites. He lived in Heshbon, and Moses and the Israelites defeated him after they came out of Egypt. ⁴⁷ They took possession of his land and the land of Og king of Bashan, the two Amorite kings who were across the Jordan to the east, ⁴⁸ from Aroer on the rim of the Arnon Valley as far as Mount Sion (that is, Hermon) ⁴⁹ and all the Arabah on the east side of the Jordan as far as the Dead Sea below the slopes of Pisgah.

5 Moses summoned all Israel and said to them, “Israel, listen to the statutes and ordinances I am proclaiming as you hear them today. Learn and follow them carefully. ² The Lord our God made a covenant with us at Horeb. ³ He did not make this covenant with our ancestors, but with all of us who are alive here today. ⁴ The Lord spoke to you face to face from the fire on the mountain. ⁵ At that time I was standing between the Lord and you to report the word of the Lord to you, because you were afraid of the fire and did not go up the mountain. And he said:

⁶ I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the place of slavery.

⁷ Do not have other gods besides me.

⁸ Do not make an idol for yourself in the shape of anything in the heavens above or on the earth below or in the waters under the earth.

⁹ Do not bow in worship to them, and do not serve them, because I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, bringing the consequences of

the fathers’ iniquity on the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate me, ¹⁰ but showing faithful love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commands.

¹¹ Do not misuse the name of the Lord your God, because the Lord will not leave anyone unpunished who misuses his name.

¹² Be careful to remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy as the Lord your God has commanded you. ¹³ You are to labor six days and do all your work, ¹⁴ but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. Do not do any work—you, your son or daughter, your male or female slave, your ox or donkey, any of your livestock, or the resident alien who lives within your city gates, so that your male and female slaves may rest as you do.

¹⁵ Remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the Lord your God brought you out of there with a strong hand and an outstretched arm. That is why the Lord your God has commanded you to keep the Sabbath day.

¹⁶ Honor your father and your mother, as the Lord your God has commanded you, so that you may live long and so that you may prosper in the land the Lord your God is giving you.

¹⁷ Do not murder.

¹⁸ Do not commit adultery.

¹⁹ Do not steal.

²⁰ Do not give dishonest testimony against your neighbor.

²¹ Do not covet your neighbor's wife or desire your neighbor's house, his field, his male or female slave, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.

²² “The Lord spoke these commands in a loud voice to your entire assembly from the fire, cloud, and total darkness on the mountain; he added nothing more. He wrote them on two stone tablets and gave them to me. ²³ All of you approached me with your tribal leaders and elders when you heard the voice from the darkness and while the mountain was blazing with fire. ²⁴ You said, ‘Look, the Lord our God has shown us his glory and greatness, and we have heard his voice from the fire. Today we have seen that God speaks with a person, yet he still lives. ²⁵ But now, why should we die? This great fire will consume us and we will die if we hear the voice of the Lord our God any longer. ²⁶ For who out of all humanity has heard the voice of the living God speaking from the fire, as we have, and lived? ²⁷ Go near and listen to everything the Lord our God says. Then you can tell us everything the Lord our God tells you; we will listen and obey.’

²⁸ “The Lord heard your words when you spoke to me. He said to me, ‘I have heard the words that these people have spoken to you. Everything they have said is right. ²⁹ If only they had such a heart to fear me and keep all my commands always, so that they and their children would prosper forever. ³⁰ Go and tell them: Return to your tents. ³¹ But you stand here with me, and I will tell you every command—the statutes and ordinances—you are to teach them, so that they may follow them in the land I am giving them to possess.’

³² “Be careful to do as the Lord your God has

commanded you; you are not to turn aside to the right or the left. ³³ Follow the whole instruction the Lord your God has commanded you, so that you may live, prosper, and have a long life in the land you will possess.

6 “This is the command—the statutes and ordinances—the Lord your God has commanded me to teach you, so that you may follow them in the land you are about to enter and possess. ² Do this so that you may fear the Lord your God all the days of your life by keeping all his statutes and commands I am giving you, your son, and your grandson, and so that you may have a long life. ³ Listen, Israel, and be careful to follow them, so that you may prosper and multiply greatly, because the Lord, the God of your ancestors, has promised you a land flowing with milk and honey.

⁴ “Listen, Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. ⁵ Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. ⁶ These words that I am giving you today are to be in your heart. ⁷ Repeat them to your children. Talk about them when you sit in your house and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. ⁸ Bind them as a sign on your hand and let them be a symbol on your forehead. ⁹ Write them on the doorposts of your house and on your city gates.

Deuteronomy 4:44-5:5

What significance do these locations carry?

There are 3 major covenants laid out in the Old Testament. Go back through each one and write down the “promise” and the “obligation” to see how they play into God’s redemptive plan.

a. Abrahamic Covenant: Genesis 12:1-3, 15, Genesis 17:1, 9-14

i. Promise: _____

ii. Obligation: _____

2. Mosaic Covenant: Exodus 19:5-8, 24:3-7, Leviticus 26:45

i. Promise: _____

ii. Obligation: _____

3. Davidic Covenant: 2 Samuel 7:12-16, 1 Kings 2:1-4

i. Promise: _____

ii. Obligation: _____

Read Jeremiah 31. What does God say he will do with the Law?

Is there a promise? An obligation?

Deuteronomy 5:6-32

What did you observe about the commandments that you’ve never noticed before?

How does the presentation of the Law differ in Exodus 20:1-21?

How does an individual benefit from these commands?

How does the community benefit from these commands?

What practices do you have in place that allow you to “draw near and listen to everything that God says”?

Deuteronomy 6:1-9

Jesus pulls from these passages in the New Testament.

Read Matthew 22:33-40. Write down your observations.

What does it mean that “all the Law and prophets hang on these two commands.”?

In what ways do you fix your mind on Christ throughout the day as you walk, sit, rise, and go?

Reflections:

In this section of Scripture, Moses is restating the Mosaic covenant that was laid out in Exodus 20. As Moses begins he reminds the Israelites to “listen and obey,” which is a recurring statement within Deuteronomy. The first verse of chapter 5 states to not only learn what God has to say but follow it. The hebraic mindset was that if you believed something that all actions would flow from that belief. In v.2-3 he states that the covenant was given at Horeb (or Mt. Sinai) and that it was not given to their ancestors but given directly to them. At first glance this may seem untrue since this generation was not at Horeb, but when we look at the language closer while simultaneously widening our scope of Scripture, we gain new perspectives. This shows how the covenants within Scripture build upon one another as God’s redemptive plan unfolds. The first covenant given to Abraham applied to his family, not the nation of Israel. The Israelites had now grown and needed guidance as to how to live out their faith as a nation. Scholars believe that the covenant made at Sinai was a necessary extension of the Lord’s covenantal promises to the patriarchs. The family of Israel had grown into a nation, but individual faith within the Abrahamic covenant had not been put aside.

Covenantal relationship with God is twofold. There is a promise of peace (in relationship) and an expectation of faithfulness (ongoing obligation). God’s desire has always been the same—wholehearted devotion to Him and passionate desire for His people. In v.6, Moses reminds the Israelites where they came from. God constantly wants our hearts and minds to remember the story that He is writing and where we came from. This motivates unhindered and passionate obedience to a good and faithful God.

As the commandments continue, they all flow from the principles of the first two. If you can get your worship and your vocation right, your faithful lives within the community will flourish. Sin is not just about a grievance against God, it always has a communal effect.

Obedience comes at a cost. We are to daily die to ourselves as we stay on the path without falling to the left or right. God promises blessing and peace in our relationship with him as we obey His commands.

Verses 6:4-9 are known as the *shema* and became a daily recitation for the Israelites. Each morning they start their day by reciting these verses and reminding themselves that following God permeates every area of our lives. We are to talk about Him, praise Him, and share His faithfulness with the next generation. In the ancient Near East, the importance of the health of the community could not be overstated. This does not mean it is only biological children that need to hear of God’s grace, but every new follower of Christ and every child needs to hear of the miraculous stories of God’s unchanging character.

God does not give caveats in this section that following the Law will be hard. He desires and requires obedience. Remember, God had already rescued them and declared them as His treasured possession. They could not break their *union* with God. However, He did give guidelines on the most abundant way to live. The Israelites had agreed, and their *communion* with God would change based on that obedience. We too cannot be separated from the love and grace of God and how He has welcomed us into his family. But, we too can obstruct our communion with God as we take our eyes off God and divide our allegiance to the world around us. Let us hold fast to the grace of God and have heads, hearts, and hands that are ready to serve and adore Him.



WEEK 6:

Deuteronomy 6:10-7:26

¹⁰ “When the Lord your God brings you into the land he swore to your ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that he would give you—a land with large and beautiful cities that you did not build, ¹¹ houses full of every good thing that you did not fill them with, cisterns that you did not dig, and vineyards and olive groves that you did not plant—and when you eat and are satisfied, ¹² be careful not to forget the Lord who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the place of slavery. ¹³ Fear the Lord your God, worship him, and take your oaths in his name. ¹⁴ Do not follow other gods, the gods of the peoples around you, ¹⁵ for the Lord your God, who is among you, is a jealous God. Otherwise, the Lord your God will become angry with you and obliterate you from the face of the earth. ¹⁶ Do not test the Lord your God as you tested him at Massah. ¹⁷ Carefully observe the commands of the Lord your God, the decrees and statutes he has commanded you. ¹⁸ Do what is right and good in the Lord’s sight, so that you may prosper and so that you may enter and possess the good land the Lord your God swore to give your ancestors, ¹⁹ by driving out all your enemies before you, as the Lord has said.

²⁰ “When your son asks you in the future, ‘What is the meaning of the decrees, statutes, and ordinances that the Lord our God has commanded you?’ ²¹ tell him, ‘We were slaves of Pharaoh in Egypt, but the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a strong hand. ²² Before our eyes the Lord inflicted great and devastating signs and wonders on Egypt, on Pharaoh, and on all his household, ²³ but he brought us from there in order to lead us in and give us the land that he swore to our ancestors. ²⁴ The Lord commanded us to follow all these statutes and to fear the Lord our God for our prosperity

always and for our preservation, as it is today. ²⁵ Righteousness will be ours if we are careful to follow every one of these commands before the Lord our God, as he has commanded us.’

7 “When the Lord your God brings you into the land you are entering to possess, and he drives out many nations before you—the Hethites, Girgashites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites, seven nations more numerous and powerful than you—² and when the Lord your God delivers them over to you and you defeat them, you must completely destroy them. Make no treaty with them and show them no mercy. ³ You must not intermarry with them, and you must not give your daughters to their sons or take their daughters for your sons, ⁴ because they will turn your sons away from me to worship other gods. Then the Lord’s anger will burn against you, and he will swiftly destroy you. ⁵ Instead, this is what you are to do to them: tear down their altars, smash their sacred pillars, cut down their Asherah poles, and burn their carved images. ⁶ For you are a holy people belonging to the Lord your God. The Lord your God has chosen you to be his own possession out of all the peoples on the face of the earth.

⁷ “The Lord had his heart set on you and chose you, not because you were more numerous than all peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples. ⁸ But because the Lord loved you and kept the oath he swore to your ancestors, he brought you out with a strong hand and redeemed you from the place of slavery, from the power of Pharaoh king of Egypt. ⁹ Know that the Lord your God is God, the faithful God who keeps his gracious covenant loyalty for a

thousand generations with those who love him and keep his commands. ¹⁰ But he directly pays back and destroys those who hate him. He will not hesitate to pay back directly the one who hates him. ¹¹ So keep the command—the statutes and ordinances—that I am giving you to follow today.

¹² “If you listen to and are careful to keep these ordinances, the Lord your God will keep his covenant loyalty with you, as he swore to your ancestors. ¹³ He will love you, bless you, and multiply you. He will bless your offspring, and the produce of your land—your grain, new wine, and fresh oil—the young of your herds, and the newborn of your flocks, in the land he swore to your ancestors that he would give you. ¹⁴ You will be blessed above all peoples; there will be no infertile male or female among you or your livestock. ¹⁵ The Lord will remove all sickness from you; he will not put on you all the terrible diseases of Egypt that you know about, but he will inflict them on all who hate you. ¹⁶ You must destroy all the peoples the Lord your God is delivering over to you and not look on them with pity. Do not worship their gods, for that will be a snare to you.

¹⁷ “If you say to yourself, ‘These nations are greater than I; how can I drive them out?’ ¹⁸ do not be afraid of them. Be sure to remember what the Lord your God did to Pharaoh and all Egypt: ¹⁹ the great trials that you saw, the signs and wonders, the strong hand and outstretched arm, by which the Lord your God brought you out. The Lord your God will do the same to all the peoples you fear. ²⁰ The Lord your God will also send hornets against them until all the survivors and those hiding from you perish. ²¹ Don’t be terrified of them, for the Lord your

God, a great and awesome God, is among you. ²² The Lord your God will drive out these nations before you little by little. You will not be able to destroy them all at once; otherwise, the wild animals will become too numerous for you. ²³ The Lord your God will give them over to you and throw them into great confusion until they are destroyed. ²⁴ He will hand their kings over to you, and you will wipe out their names under heaven. No one will be able to stand against you; you will annihilate them. ²⁵ Burn up the carved images of their gods. Don’t covet the silver and gold on the images and take it for yourself, or else you will be ensnared by it, for it is detestable to the Lord your God. ²⁶ Do not bring any detestable thing into your house, or you will be set apart for destruction like it. You are to abhor and detest it utterly because it is set apart for destruction.

Things to ponder:

Summarize the passage in your own words:

What questions do you have?

Deuteronomy 6:10-25

What stands out to you in these verses?

What material blessings would Israel receive when they entered Canaan?

Why does Moses warn Israel about these blessings they would receive?

List the various ways Moses instructs Israel to obey God in these verses.

What might cause us to forget God today, and how can we safeguard our relationship with Him?

Deuteronomy 7:1-16

How do these verses describe God?

What is your response to these truths about God?

What about God and His character challenges or comforts you?

What does this passage teach us about God choosing Israel as His own?

What are the blessings? What are the responsibilities?

Read Colossians 3:1-17. How are we to live today as God's holy and chosen people?

Deuteronomy 7:17-26

What stands out to you in these verses?

What danger does Moses anticipate for Israel as they enter the land, and how does he encourage them?

What fears tempt you to forget the Lord in your life?
What practical steps can you take to remember His power?

As you go:

Reflect on what this lesson has taught you about God, His character, and His love for you. What has been most meaningful to you as you consider the God you serve? Write a prayer of response to Him.

Reflections:

Imagine how Moses' words in 6:10-11 would have sounded to people who wandered in the wilderness for forty years, living in tents and relying on God's provisions of manna, quail, and water. What riches await them in this Promised Land that God Himself would give! They may have been thinking, "Yes! Of course we will remember the Lord!" But what we often observe in people is that prosperity quickly leads to self-sufficiency and believing the lie that we are able to provide for ourselves. When life is comfortable and filled with good things, we are quick to forget the One who is the source and giver of all good things. Moses intentionally tells the people what blessings they can expect in the land to remind them that God is the One who will deliver these good things to them. He also reminds them yet again of the ways God has already fought for them and delivered them this far. Moses instructs the people to remember the Lord and obey Him out of gratitude.

Belonging to God means being separated and set apart, so Moses reminds Israel of the expectation that they will utterly destroy the wicked nations they will encounter as they inhabit the land. Israel is a nation chosen by God not because of anything they have accomplished, not because of their great power, not even because they have been wholeheartedly dedicated to the one true God. God chose them because He loved them. He made a covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob which He intended to maintain throughout the generations of Israel. Moses instructs Israel to live as a people chosen by God, knowing that He is faithful and loyal to those who obey and live in relationship with Him.

Moses addresses the fear Israel might face as they look at the nations to be defeated, knowing the path ahead will not be easy. He reminds them of the power God displayed in delivering them from Egypt and assures them that He will again use His power to accomplish His promises. Moses says God will send "hornets" against their enemy nations which may mean literal insects that sting or possibly smaller warring groups that will debilitate their enemies' armies. Moses also tells them that God will drive out the nations "little by little" which reminds us that God has a timetable. Israel should not expect complete victory all at once, but only as quickly as God determines is best. As these nations are eliminated, Israel is instructed to annihilate them and their gods completely in obedience to God.

In this passage, Moses gives Israel motivation to obey God out of gratitude for what He will do and has already done. As they gain prosperity in the Promised Land, Israel's challenge will be to remain faithful to God who maintained His covenant promises to them. This challenge also exists for us today as believers in Jesus Christ. We, too, must intentionally remember God's work in our lives and the promises He gives us in His Word which serve to anchor us in relationship with our good God.



WEEK 7:

Deuteronomy 8:1-9:6

8 “Carefully follow every command I am giving you today, so that you may live and increase, and may enter and take possession of the land the Lord swore to your ancestors. ² Remember that the Lord your God led you on the entire journey these forty years in the wilderness, so that he might humble you and test you to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commands. ³ He humbled you by letting you go hungry; then he gave you manna to eat, which you and your ancestors had not known, so that you might learn that man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord. ⁴ Your clothing did not wear out, and your feet did not swell these forty years. ⁵ Keep in mind that the Lord your God has been disciplining you just as a man disciplines his son. ⁶ So keep the commands of the Lord your God by walking in his ways and fearing him. ⁷ For the Lord your God is bringing you into a good land, a land with streams, springs, and deep water sources, flowing in both valleys and hills; ⁸ a land of wheat, barley, vines, figs, and pomegranates; a land of olive oil and honey; ⁹ a land where you will eat food without shortage, where you will lack nothing; a land whose rocks are iron and from whose hills you will mine copper. ¹⁰ When you eat and are full, you will bless the Lord your God for the good land he has given you.

¹¹ “Be careful that you don’t forget the Lord your God by failing to keep his commands, ordinances, and statutes that I am giving you today. ¹² When you eat and are full, and build beautiful houses to live in, ¹³ and your herds and flocks grow large, and your silver and gold multiply, and everything else you have increases, ¹⁴ be careful that your heart

doesn’t become proud and you forget the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the place of slavery. ¹⁵ He led you through the great and terrible wilderness with its poisonous snakes and scorpions, a thirsty land where there was no water. He brought water out of the flint rock for you. ¹⁶ He fed you in the wilderness with manna, which your ancestors had not known, in order to humble and test you, so that in the end he might cause you to prosper. ¹⁷ You may say to yourself, ‘My power and my own ability have gained this wealth for me,’ ¹⁸ but remember that the Lord your God gives you the power to gain wealth, in order to confirm his covenant he swore to your ancestors, as it is today. ¹⁹ If you ever forget the Lord your God and follow other gods to serve them and bow in worship to them, I testify against you today that you will certainly perish. ²⁰ Like the nations the Lord is about to destroy before you, you will perish if you do not obey the Lord your God.

9 “Listen, Israel: Today you are about to cross the Jordan to enter and drive out nations greater and stronger than you, with large cities fortified to the heavens. ² The people are strong and tall, the descendants of the Anakim. You know about them and you have heard it said about them, ‘Who can stand up to the sons of Anak?’ ³ But understand that today the Lord your God will cross over ahead of you as a consuming fire; he will devastate and subdue them before you. You will drive them out and destroy them swiftly, as the Lord has told you. ⁴ When the Lord your God drives them out before you, do not say to yourself, ‘The Lord brought me in to take possession of this land because of my righteousness.’ Instead, the Lord will drive out these nations

before you because of their wickedness.

⁵ You are not going to take possession of their land because of your righteousness or your integrity. Instead, the Lord your God will drive out these nations before you because of their wickedness, in order to fulfill the promise he swore to your ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. ⁶ Understand that the Lord your God is not giving you this good land to possess because of your righteousness, for you are a stiff-necked people.

Things to ponder:

Summarize the passage in your own words:

What questions do you have?

Deuteronomy 8:1-10

List ways that God humbled and tested Israel. What was often Israel's response to the challenges they faced in the wilderness? (see Exodus 16:1-4 and Numbers 11:4-6, 20:2-5, 21:5)

According to verse 3, what was God's purpose in giving Israel manna to eat?

Refer to Matthew 4 and briefly describe the story you find there.

How did Jesus use Deuteronomy 8:3 in this situation, and what does this teach us about God?

How do you define discipline? What is the purpose of God's discipline? (See Hebrews 12:10-11)

How have you experienced the Lord's discipline in your own life?

After 40 years of eating quail and manna in the wilderness, what do you imagine Israel's response might have been to the list of good things God would give them in Canaan?

Deuteronomy 8:11-20

What is Moses' warning to Israel in these verses?

What does this warning teach you about human nature?

Where have you observed this kind of pride in the world around you, or how have you been tempted to take credit for things God has done in your own life?

What are the consequences Moses names in verses 19-20 for forgetting the Lord and not obeying Him?

How does this compare with Romans 6:23?

Deuteronomy 9:1-6

What details does Moses give in verses 1-2 about the nations Israel is about to face, and why is it important for Israel to remember these things?

What two reasons does Moses give for God going before Israel to destroy the Canaanites?

What do these verses teach us about ourselves and about God?

As you go:

Make a list of challenges you have faced in your life and how God provided for you.

When did God provide in surprising or unexpected ways for a situation you faced?

Write a prayer of response to God.

A series of horizontal lines for writing, intended for listing challenges and writing a prayer of response.

Reflections:

We know that Israel's refusal to enter Canaan resulted in forty years of wilderness wandering. But in Deuteronomy 8:2, we also see that God used those years to "humble them and test their hearts." Israel had lived in slavery in Egypt for 400 years during which time they completed the dirty and back-breaking labor of making bricks in the hot sun day after day after day. They had to meet their daily quota of bricks and obey their owners or suffer intense consequences. When God delivered Israel from Egypt, they were freed of both the manual labor and those who ruled over them. In the wilderness, free of Egyptian rulers and rules and with no way to provide for themselves, Israel was challenged to submit to God's rule and to trust God's provision.

Human responses to hardship reveal the state of our hearts, and Israel's repeated complaining in their circumstances demonstrated their lack of trust in God's provision. So God used the wilderness years as a time to discipline Israel "as a father disciplines a son." We often think of discipline in punitive terms, but discipline is an effort to train someone toward maturity. Through the wilderness challenges, God taught Israel how to be His people, set apart from all other nations, and to trust in Him as He provided for all their needs.

God's provision is not always what we want or would choose. Israel surely did not want to eat manna and quail in the wilderness for 40 years. Yet God provided these consistently, lovingly, and faithfully even when Israel complained and rebelled against Him. God sent manna to teach Israel "that man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord." Jesus, the Bread of Life, repeated these words when Satan tempted Him to turn stones to bread. Our heavenly Father does provide for our physical needs, but more importantly He provides for our spiritual needs. Life and blessing are found in listening to God, obeying His statutes, and loving Him with everything we have.

Moses tells Israel that now, having lived through those years of discipline and training, the people are about to inhabit a rich land where they will enjoy abundant water and food, beautiful homes, and the multiplication of flocks and herds. Moses warns Israel against pride because they do not deserve nor will they earn for themselves this rich land with all its blessings. Rather, they will receive these good things from their God as He drives out the wicked nations before them. The warning is clear - Israel must obey the Lord to avoid the fate of their enemies.

As God's people today, we also have been given abundant gifts that we have not earned and do not deserve. Our loving heavenly Father has offered salvation through the blood of His Son, Jesus Christ, who paid the price we deserve for sin and offers us His righteousness that we might be reconciled to God. We, too, are called to remember God's provision and faithfulness as we strive to obey His Word.



WEEK 8:

Deuteronomy 9:7-10:22

⁷ “Remember and do not forget how you provoked the Lord your God in the wilderness. You have been rebelling against the Lord from the day you left the land of Egypt until you reached this place. ⁸ You provoked the Lord at Horeb, and he was angry enough with you to destroy you. ⁹ When I went up the mountain to receive the stone tablets, the tablets of the covenant the Lord made with you, I stayed on the mountain forty days and forty nights. I did not eat food or drink water. ¹⁰ On the day of the assembly the Lord gave me the two stone tablets, inscribed by God’s finger. The exact words were on them, which the Lord spoke to you from the fire on the mountain. ¹¹ The Lord gave me the two stone tablets, the tablets of the covenant, at the end of the forty days and forty nights.

¹² “The Lord said to me, ‘Get up and go down immediately from here. For your people whom you brought out of Egypt have acted corruptly. They have quickly turned from the way that I commanded them; they have made a cast image for themselves.’ ¹³ The Lord also said to me, ‘I have seen this people, and indeed, they are a stiff-necked people. ¹⁴ Leave me alone, and I will destroy them and blot out their name under heaven. Then I will make you into a nation stronger and more numerous than they.’

¹⁵ “So I went back down the mountain, while it was blazing with fire, and the two tablets of the covenant were in my hands. ¹⁶ I saw how you had sinned against the Lord your God; you had made a calf image for yourselves. You had quickly turned from the way the Lord had commanded for you. ¹⁷ So I took hold of the two tablets and threw them from my

hands, shattering them before your eyes. ¹⁸ I fell down like the first time in the presence of the Lord for forty days and forty nights; I did not eat food or drink water because of all the sin you committed, doing what was evil in the Lord’s sight and angering him. ¹⁹ I was afraid of the fierce anger the Lord had directed against you, because he was about to destroy you. But again the Lord listened to me on that occasion. ²⁰ The Lord was angry enough with Aaron to destroy him. But I prayed for Aaron at that time also. ²¹ I took the sinful calf you had made and burned it. I crushed it, thoroughly grinding it to powder as fine as dust, and threw its dust into the stream that came down from the mountain.

²² “You continued to provoke the Lord at Taberah, Massah, and Kibroth-hattaavah. ²³ When the Lord sent you from Kadesh-barnea, he said, ‘Go up and possess the land I have given you’; you rebelled against the command of the Lord your God. You did not believe or obey him. ²⁴ You have been rebelling against the Lord ever since I have known you.

²⁵ “I fell down in the presence of the Lord forty days and forty nights because the Lord had threatened to destroy you. ²⁶ I prayed to the Lord:

Lord God, do not annihilate your people, your inheritance, whom you redeemed through your greatness and brought out of Egypt with a strong hand. ²⁷ Remember your servants Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Disregard this people’s stubbornness, and their wickedness and sin. ²⁸ Otherwise, those in the land you brought us from will say, ‘Because the Lord wasn’t able to bring them into the land he

had promised them, and because he hated them, he brought them out to kill them in the wilderness.’²⁹ But they are your people, your inheritance, whom you brought out by your great power and outstretched arm.

10 “The Lord said to me at that time, ‘Cut two stone tablets like the first ones and come to me on the mountain and make a wooden ark. ² I will write on the tablets the words that were on the first tablets you broke, and you are to place them in the ark.’ ³ So I made an ark of acacia wood, cut two stone tablets like the first ones, and climbed the mountain with the two tablets in my hand. ⁴ Then on the day of the assembly, the Lord wrote on the tablets what had been written previously, the Ten Commandments that he had spoken to you on the mountain from the fire. The Lord gave them to me, ⁵ and I went back down the mountain and placed the tablets in the ark I had made. And they have remained there, as the Lord commanded me.”

⁶ The Israelites traveled from Beeroth Bene-jaakan to Moserah. Aaron died and was buried there, and Eleazar his son became priest in his place. ⁷ They traveled from there to Gudgodah, and from Gudgodah to Jotbathah, a land with flowing streams.

⁸ “At that time the Lord set apart the tribe of Levi to carry the ark of the Lord’s covenant, to stand before the Lord to serve him, and to pronounce blessings in his name, as it is today. ⁹ For this reason, Levi does not have a portion or inheritance like his brothers; the Lord is his inheritance, as the Lord your God told him.

¹⁰ “I stayed on the mountain forty days and forty nights like the first time. The Lord also listened to me on this occasion; he agreed not to annihilate you. ¹¹ Then the Lord said to me, ‘Get up. Continue your journey ahead of the people, so that they may enter and possess the land I swore to give their ancestors.’

¹² “And now, Israel, what does the Lord your God ask of you except to fear the Lord your God by walking in all his ways, to love him, and to worship the Lord your God with all your heart and all your soul? ¹³ Keep the Lord’s commands and statutes I am giving you today, for your own good. ¹⁴ The heavens, indeed the highest heavens, belong to the Lord your God, as does the earth and everything in it. ¹⁵ Yet the Lord had his heart set on your ancestors and loved them. He chose their descendants after them—he chose you out of all the peoples, as it is today. ¹⁶ Therefore, circumcise your hearts and don’t be stiff-necked any longer. ¹⁷ For the Lord your God is the God of gods and Lord of lords, the great, mighty, and awe-inspiring God, showing no partiality and taking no bribe. ¹⁸ He executes justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the resident alien, giving him food and clothing. ¹⁹ You are also to love the resident alien, since you were resident aliens in the land of Egypt. ²⁰ You are to fear the Lord your God and worship him. Remain faithful to him and take oaths in his name. ²¹ He is your praise and he is your God, who has done for you these great and awe-inspiring works your eyes have seen. ²² Your ancestors went down to Egypt, seventy people in all, and now the Lord your God has made you numerous, like the stars of the sky.

Things to ponder:

Summarize the passage in your own words:

What questions do you have?

Deuteronomy 9:7-29

What stands out to you in Moses's retelling of Israel's rebellion at Mt. Horeb in these verses?

How might revisiting this history help Israel understand God's purpose for them?

What do we learn about prayer and intercession from these verses?

What events might you list to demonstrate God's hand in your own life?

Deuteronomy 10:1-11

What stands out to you in these verses?

How are the second set of stone tablets a representation of God's mercy and grace?

In what ways did God provide for the spiritual lives of Israel?

How has God provided for your spiritual growth?

Deuteronomy 10:12-22

From verse 12, list what God asked of Israel and describe what you understand each of these to mean.

What are some ways we can implement these things into our own lives today?

What do you understand about circumcision? What does it mean to “circumcise your hearts”?

How have you experienced heart transformation as the Holy Spirit has worked in you?

What do you learn about God in these verses? What type of people is He particularly attuned to?

How are we to respond to the Lord our God?

As you go:

Reflect on the spiritual growth you have experienced already by God’s grace. Sit in His presence and ask what areas of your life He would like to grow next. Consider what might need to change in your life to grow in these ways. Record what comes to mind and commit these ideas to prayer, perhaps even with a trusted friend or family member.

Reflections:

The events Moses mentions in Deuteronomy 9-10 cannot be read chronologically, but they serve to remind Israel of her historical rebellion and God's covenantal faithfulness. Moses describes the events at Mt. Horeb which had occurred forty years ago, but many of the people listening to Moses had not been present for this rebellion. Moses leans into this story because all people are sinful by nature, desiring to make their own rules and to live their own way. Even if this generation was not involved in the idol worship at Horeb, they are at risk of rebellion against God as they receive the land God promised them. Recounting this history reminds Israel how easy it is to fall away from trusting God and encourages them to keep their eyes and hearts on Him because He has chosen them as His own.

Moses understands the power of prayer and the need for intercession. He tells Israel about the forty days and nights he interceded on their behalf before the Lord following their rebellion at Mt. Horeb. Moses had broken the original stone tablets, but God responded to Moses' intercession by giving Israel a second set of stone tablets. This reminds us of God's grace and mercy extended repeatedly throughout time as He calls sinners back into obedience to Him. The tribe of Levi had been set apart to stand before the Lord, to serve Him on behalf of Israel, and to carry the ark which held the stone tablets during Israel's wilderness travels. Aaron had been the high priest, but he died and was replaced by Eleazer now that Israel is about to enter the Promised Land. Moses has led and prayed for the people for forty years, he knows his time with Israel is limited, and he will not enter the land with them. By recounting these details, Moses strives to prepare the people to listen to the spiritual leaders God has provided who will continue to lead the nation before Him.

Deuteronomy 10 ends by describing what God asks of Israel and builds Moses' argument that they should obey Him for their own good. God has chosen to enter into relationship with Israel over any nation on earth. This God who chose Israel, set His heart on her, and loved her is "God of gods, Lord of lords, the great, mighty, and awe-inspiring God..." Israel is called to obey their God and to reflect His justice, love, and faithfulness to the nations in the land they inhabit. Moses has reminded Israel that God knows them intimately and their past relationship with Him has not been good. In spite of their past rebellion, God has remained faithful to His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and continues to invite Israel into a loving relationship with Himself. By remembering their history of rebellion, Israel is invited to commit to the Lord their God as they enter the land He will give them.

Consider your own patterns of rebellion against God and His actions of mercy and grace toward you. With these in mind, how can you personally put into practice Deuteronomy 10:12-13?



Bible Study Resources

Riverview Resources

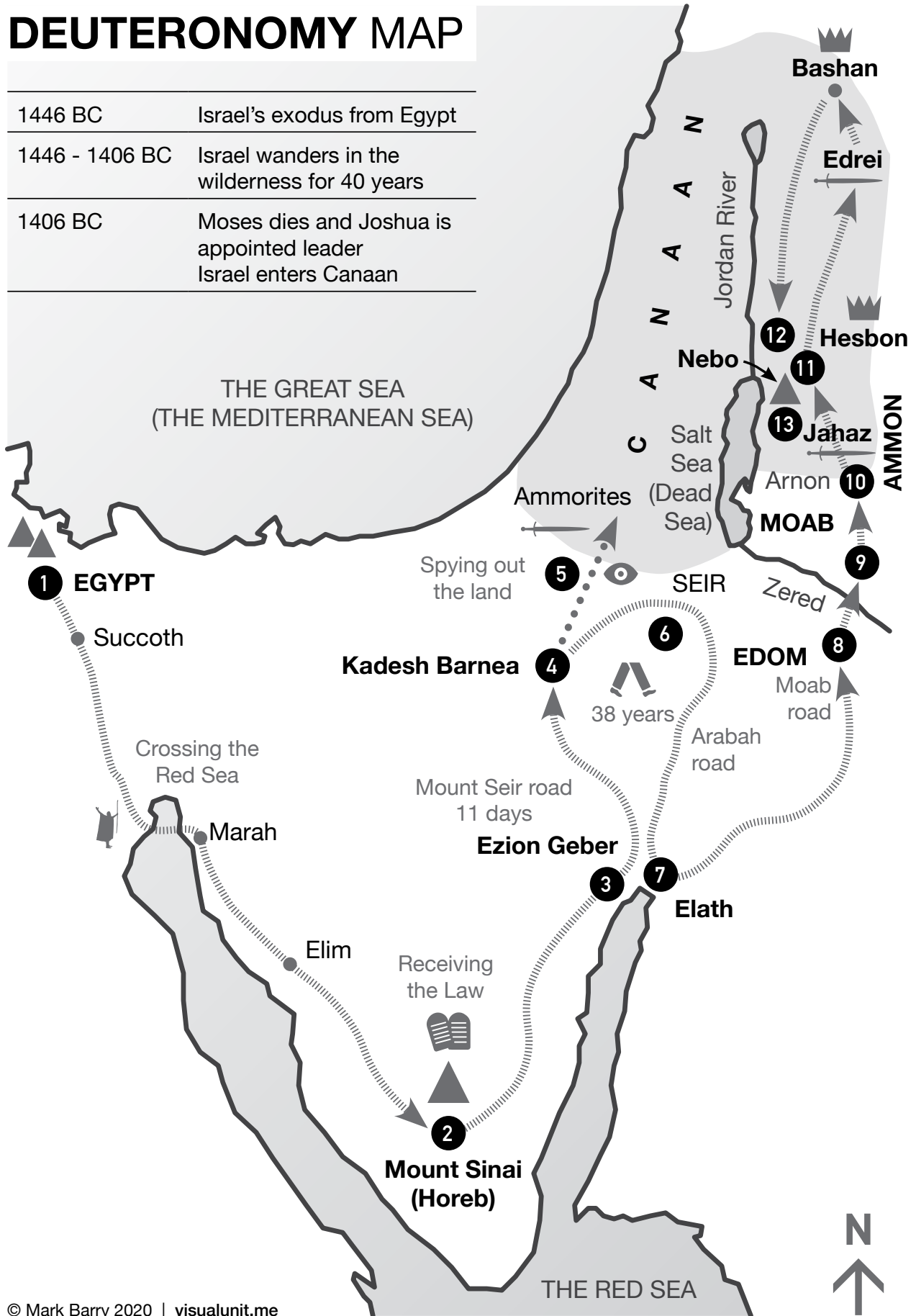
- **Introduction to Inductive Bible Study** - rivchurch.com/inductivebiblestudy
a short video outlining how we approach studying the Bible. (15 minutes)
- **Reading the Bible Normally** - rivchurch.com/readingthebiblenormally
a one-page document outlining how we approach studying the Bible.
- **Comprehension Questions** - rivchurch.com/biblecomprehensionquestions
strategies to help you consider what the Bible says.
- **Five Ws Study Guide** - rivchurch.com/fivewstudyguide
a list of questions to get you started.
- **Riverview's Messages** - rivchurch.com/watch/messages
A catalog of current and past messages from Riverview Church.
Sort by series, speaker, or location.
- **Online Classes** - rivchurch.com/watch/online-classes
Three on-demand classes to get you plugged into Riverview (Membership Class), familiar with the Bible (Bible Basics), and studying the Bible (Interpreting the Bible Normally).

Other Resources

- **CSB Study Bible**
- **Bible Gateway** - biblegateway.com
A searchable online Bible with over 200 translations and audio versions.
- **Interlinear Bible** - biblehub.com/interlinear
Greek and Hebrew with Concordance
- **BibleRef** - bibleref.com
Free online Bible commentary
- **The Bible Project YouTube channel** - youtube.com/user/jointhebibleproject
Short, animated videos that help you better understand the Bible.
- **Got Questions? website** - gotquestions.org
A searchable resource of over 7,600 answers to frequently asked Bible questions.
- *Women of the Word: How to Study the Bible with Both Our Hearts and Our Minds*
by Jen Wilkin
- *Grasping God's Word: A Hands-On Approach to Reading, Interpreting, and Applying the Bible*
by Scott Duvall & Daniel Hayes
- *The Old Testament Law for the Life of the Church: Reading the Torah in the Light of Christ*
by Richard E. Averbeck

DEUTERONOMY MAP

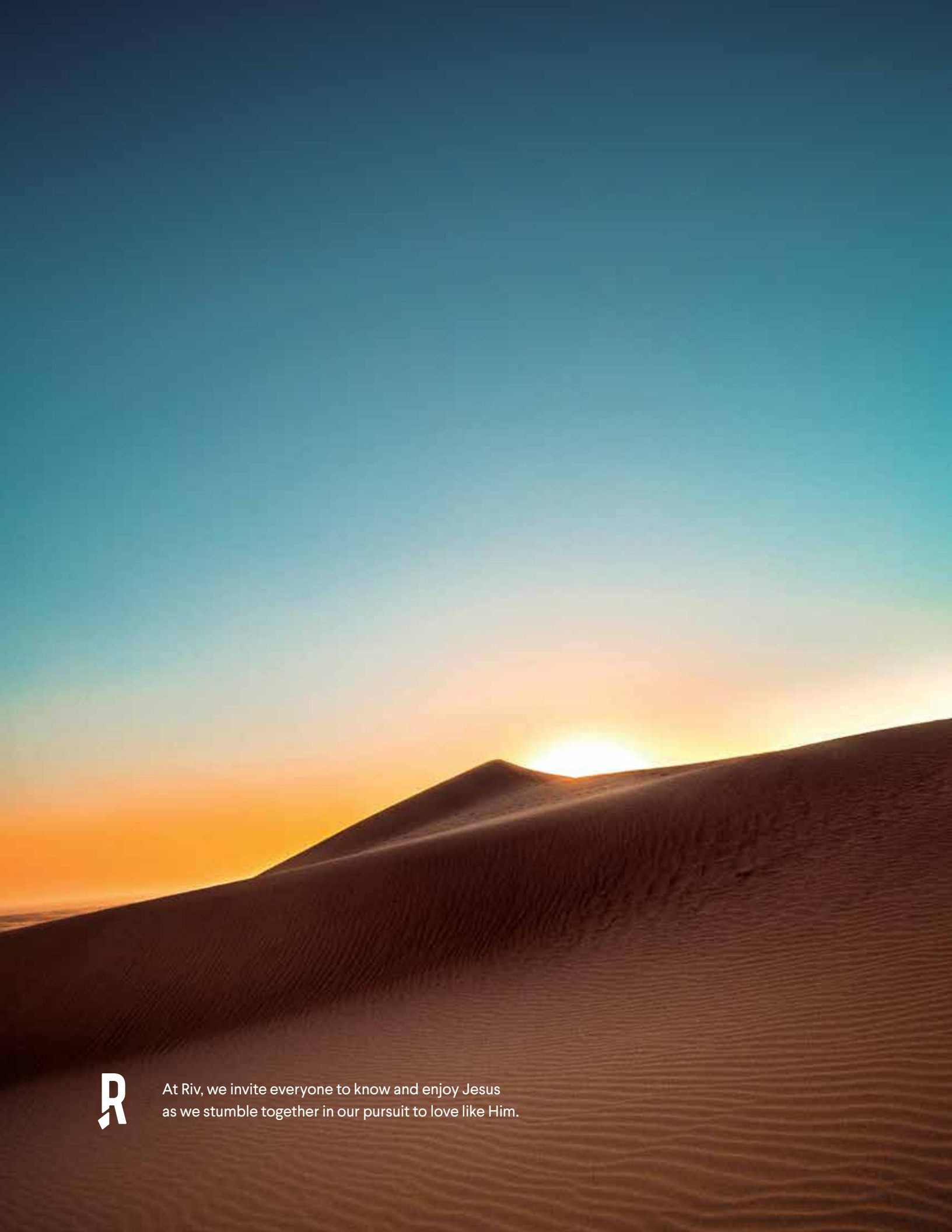
1446 BC	Israel's exodus from Egypt
1446 - 1406 BC	Israel wanders in the wilderness for 40 years
1406 BC	Moses dies and Joshua is appointed leader Israel enters Canaan



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DEUTERONOMY MAP | KEY

- 1. Egypt:** God saves Israel out of slavery in Egypt and leads them to Mount Sinai (Horeb).
- 2. Mount Sinai (Horeb):** God gives Israel the law through Moses and commands Israel to head to Canaan and take the land he promised to their forefathers (1:6-8).
- 3. Mount Seir road:** Israel make the 11-day trek from Horeb to Kadesh Barnea (1:2,19). Moses commands Israel to take the land (1:20-21).
- 4. Kadesh Barnea:** Israel sends spies to scope out the land and they return with news of its goodness *and* its giant inhabitants. Israel rebels against God and refuses to enter the land (1:22-33). God swears that no living adult (except Joshua) will enter the land (1:34-40).
5. Israel defiantly marches into the hill country of the Amorites and is soundly beaten back, camping in Kadesh for many days (1:41-45).
- 6. Seir | Arabah road:** Israel wanders around the hill country of Seir back towards the Red Sea and along the Arabah road for many years (2:1; 2:14).
- 7. Elath | Moab road:** God instructs Israel to head back north peacefully past the descendants of Esau (Edom) from Elath and Ezion Geber along the Moab road (2:2-8).
- 8. Zered:** God instructs Israel to travel peacefully past the Moabites and across the Zered Valley. 38 years have now passed since leaving Kadesh Barnea and the whole generation of fighting men has died (2:9,13-14).
- 9. Moab:** God commands Israel to leave Moab and travel peacefully past the Ammonites (2:16-19).
- 10. Arnon Gorge | Jahaz:** Israel sets out across the Arnon Gorge and seek to make peace with Sihon the Amorite (King of Heshbon). However, he meets them for battle at Jahaz, where his army is completely defeated and all his cities taken (2:24-37).
- 11. Hesbon | Edrei:** As Israel heads from Hesbon towards Bashan, Og the Amorite (King of Bashan) meets them for battle at Edrei, where his army is also defeated and all his cities taken as well (3:1-10).
- 12. Beth Peor:** After all the land East of the Jordan is divided between the tribes of Reuben, Gad and Manasseh (3:12-13), Israel camps in the valley near Beth Peor (3:29). Here Moses reminds Israel of her past, before renewing the covenant with God, as they prepare to enter the land without him.
- 13. Mount Nebo:** After Moses looks to Israel's future and blesses the tribes, he climbs Mount Nebo to see the promised land with his own eyes, before he dies (34:1-5).



At Riv, we invite everyone to know and enjoy Jesus
as we stumble together in our pursuit to love like Him.

Deuteronomy

S T U D Y G U I D E

WINTER SESSION 2024



Written by Alex McGraw and Julie Partridge

Deuteronomy

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Deuteronomy Study Guide - Winter Session 2024

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Schedule

Week	Date	Topic	Location	Session Complete
1	Sept. 20	Introduction	Westside	
2	Sept. 27	Deuteronomy 1	Westside	
3	Oct. 4	Deuteronomy 2-3	Westside	
4	Oct. 11	Deuteronomy 4:1-43	Westside	
5	Oct. 18	Deuteronomy 4:44-6:9	Westside	
6	Oct. 25	Deuteronomy 6:10-7:26	Westside	
7	Nov. 1	Deuteronomy 8:1-9:6	Westside	
8	Nov. 8	Deuteronomy 9:7-10:22	Westside	
Winter Break				
9	Jan. 17	Deuteronomy 11	Holt	
10	Jan. 24	Deuteronomy 12-14	Holt	
11	Jan. 31	Deuteronomy 15:1-16:17	Holt	
12	Feb. 7	Deuteronomy 16:18-18:22	Holt	
13	Feb. 14	Deuteronomy 19-20	Holt	
14	Feb. 21	Deuteronomy 21-22	Holt	
15	Feb. 28	Deuteronomy 23-24	Holt	
16	Mar. 6	Deuteronomy 25-26	Holt	
Spring Break				
17	Apr. 10	Deuteronomy 27	REO Town	
18	Apr. 17	Deuteronomy 28	REO Town	
19	Apr. 24	Deuteronomy 29-30	REO Town	
20	May 1	Deuteronomy 31	REO Town	
21	May 8	Deuteronomy 32	REO Town	
22	May 15	Deuteronomy 33-34	REO Town	



Recap of Deuteronomy 1-10

Deuteronomy, the fifth and final book of the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Bible), is a collection of sermons Moses spoke to the people of Israel at the end of their forty years (Deuteronomy 1:3) in the wilderness. Moses is speaking as the spiritual leader of Israel to prepare them for their entry into and possession of Canaan, the land God had promised to their ancestors. Moses will not be going with them into the Promised Land, so he takes this last opportunity to remind them of God's laws and to call Israel to obedience.

Deuteronomy 1-3 outlines some of the significant events in Israel's history following their exodus from Egypt. Moses reminds Israel that God instructed them to leave Mt. Sinai where He had given them His law and brought them across the wilderness to Kadesh-barnea which sat at the edge of the Promised Land. When God instructed them to go in and take the land He had promised, Israel did not go because they were afraid that they would be destroyed by the large and powerful nations they would have to defeat. It was because of this disobedience that Israel wandered in the wilderness for forty years, until all the people who were 20 years old and older at the time of Israel's disobedience had died. During those forty years, God taught Israel what it means to be His chosen people and to bear His name. During their years of wandering, God provided for all their needs and disciplined their complaining so that they might learn to trust and obey Him. As the forty years of wandering came to a close, God led the people back to the edge of the Promised Land and handed over King Sihon and King Og to Israel, demonstrating how He would go before them into battle as they entered to take possession of the land God had promised to Abraham.

Following these reminders in chapters 1-3 from Israel's history regarding how God had been with them and provided for them, Moses calls Israel to obey the Lord their God. Moses reminds Israel of the remarkable privilege they have to be God's chosen people, to have heard His voice, and to know He is near to them. Moses calls Israel to worship only the true God and not to make idols of any kind. He reminds them of God's law: the ten commandments in 6:1-21 and the shema in 6:4-5. These words represent the covenant God has established with Israel in which He will be their God and they will be His people. Moses directs Israel to destroy the nations in Canaan because God is bringing judgment on their sin and rebellion. God does not want their wicked and idolatrous behavior to negatively influence Israel, who are called to worship Him alone. Moses knows Israel's inclination toward pride and autonomy, and calls the people to remember all that God has done and to trust He will go before them as they enter and possess Canaan.

In chapter 9, Moses reminds Israel of a time when he had to intercede on their behalf because of their rebellion. But Moses is not entering the land with them; he will not be their spiritual leader any longer. More than anything, Moses wants Israel to love God and to live in obedience to Him so that they can enter and possess the land God had promised to their ancestors and then enjoy their inheritance as God's holy and chosen people.



WEEK 9:

Deuteronomy 11

11 “Therefore, love the Lord your God and always keep his mandate and his statutes, ordinances, and commands. ² Understand today that it is not your children who experienced or saw the discipline of the Lord your God:

His greatness, strong hand, and outstretched arm; ³ his signs and the works he did in Egypt to Pharaoh king of Egypt and all his land; ⁴ what he did to Egypt’s army, its horses and chariots, when he made the water of the Red Sea flow over them as they pursued you, and he destroyed them completely; ⁵ what he did to you in the wilderness until you reached this place; ⁶ and what he did to Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab the Reubenite, when in the middle of the whole Israelite camp the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them, their households, their tents, and every living thing with them.

⁷ Your own eyes have seen every great work the Lord has done.

⁸ “Keep every command I am giving you today, so that you may have the strength to cross into and possess the land you are to inherit, ⁹ and so that you may live long in the land the Lord swore to your ancestors to give them and their descendants, a land flowing with milk and honey. ¹⁰ For the land you are entering to possess is not like the land of Egypt, from which you have come, where you sowed your seed and irrigated by hand as in a vegetable garden. ¹¹ But the land you are entering to possess is a land of mountains and valleys, watered by rain from the sky. ¹² It is a land the Lord your God cares for. He is always watching over it from the beginning to the end of the year.

¹³ “If you carefully obey my commands I am giving you today, to love the Lord your God and worship him with all your heart and all your soul, ¹⁴ I will provide rain for your land in the proper time, the autumn and spring rains, and you will harvest your grain, new wine, and fresh oil. ¹⁵ I will provide grass in your fields for your livestock. You will eat and be satisfied. ¹⁶ Be careful that you are not enticed to turn aside, serve, and bow in worship to other gods. ¹⁷ Then the Lord’s anger will burn against you. He will shut the sky, and there will be no rain; the land will not yield its produce, and you will perish quickly from the good land the Lord is giving you.

¹⁸ “Imprint these words of mine on your hearts and minds, bind them as a sign on your hands, and let them be a symbol on your foreheads. ¹⁹ Teach them to your children, talking about them when you sit in your house and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. ²⁰ Write them on the doorposts of your house and on your city gates, ²¹ so that as long as the heavens are above the earth, your days and those of your children may be many in the land the Lord swore to give your ancestors. ²² For if you carefully observe every one of these commands I am giving you to follow—to love the Lord your God, walk in all his ways, and remain faithful to him— ²³ the Lord will drive out all these nations before you, and you will drive out nations greater and stronger than you are. ²⁴ Every place the sole of your foot treads will be yours. Your territory will extend from the wilderness to Lebanon and from the Euphrates River to the Mediterranean Sea. ²⁵ No one will be able to stand against you; the Lord your God will put fear and dread of you in all the land where you set foot, as he has promised you.

²⁶ “Look, today I set before you a blessing and a curse: ²⁷ there will be a blessing, if you obey the commands of the Lord your God I am giving you today, ²⁸ and a curse, if you do not obey the commands of the Lord your God and you turn aside from the path I command you today by following other gods you have not known. ²⁹ When the Lord your God brings you into the land you are entering to possess, you are to proclaim the blessing at Mount Gerizim and the curse at Mount Ebal. ³⁰ Aren’t these mountains across the Jordan, beyond the western road in the land of the Canaanites, who live in the Arabah, opposite Gilgal, near the oaks of Moreh? ³¹ For you are about to cross the Jordan to enter and take possession of the land the Lord your God is giving you. When you possess it and settle in it, ³² be careful to follow all the statutes and ordinances I set before you today.

Deuteronomy 11:1-9

This chapter begins with “Therefore.” Review chapter 10. What is the “therefore” there for?

List what happened to the Egyptians (see Exodus 7-14) and to Dathan and Abiram (See Numbers 16).

What point is Moses making with these examples? Why did God destroy the Egyptians, Dathan, and Abiram?

By contrast, what is the Lord commanding Israel to do, and what will be the results if they obey?

Circle or count the word “land” in these verses and up to verse 25. What can we learn about God when we consider the significance of the land Israel would possess?

What promises has God made to us in His Word that we can trust Him to fulfill? Include verses you find which indicate God's promises to us.

Deuteronomy 11:10-25

Moses states that the land Israel would enter “is a land the Lord your God cares for.” List the ways God would care for the land if Israel obeyed God.

What warning does Moses give in these verses? Moses repeats this warning several times throughout these sermons - why do you think this is so?

What action words does Moses use as ways Israel can intentionally remember God's commands?

What steps could we take to remember God's commands and to avoid idolatry in our lives today?

Deuteronomy 11:26-32

Moses sets before Israel a blessing and a curse. What are the conditions for each?

What action is Israel to take when they enter the land?

What blessings have you received through obedience to God? What struggles have you faced as a result of disobedience to Him?

As You Go:

Find a promise in God’s word that is particularly meaningful to you. Write the verse you choose here, and commit it to memory.

Reflections:

Deuteronomy 10:20-22 reads, “You are to fear the Lord your God and worship him. Remain faithful to him and take oaths in his name. He is your praise and He is your God, who has done for you these great and awe-inspiring works your eyes have seen. Your ancestors went down to Egypt, seventy people in all, and now the Lord your God has made you numerous, like the stars of the sky.” Deuteronomy 11:1 says, “Therefore, love the Lord your God and always keep his mandate and his statutes, ordinances, and commands.” Again and again in these sermons, Moses instructs Israel to remember what God has done for them in the past to inspire obedience into the future. In this case, God has increased their numbers as He promised Abraham so long ago and now they are a great nation, poised to enter the land God also promised to Abraham.

The people listening to Moses’ last words were younger than 20 years old at the time of the exodus; the older generation died in the wilderness . Moses reminds Israel to teach their children who either were too young to remember or not even born when God judged Egypt’s wickedness with the ten plagues, when the Egyptian army was destroyed in the Red Sea chasing after Israel, and when Dathan and Abiram were swallowed into the earth due to their sin and rebellion. Moses is making the point that God will also judge Israel if they sin against God, so the younger people need to hear the stories and be taught the consequences of rebellion.

But God loves His people and intends to bless them when they obey. Israel is His chosen people through whom He intends to bring the Messiah. The Lord also loves this land and cares for it because this is the land which He has chosen to be the place of Jesus’ birth, death, and resurrection. God makes a specific promise to care for the land by bringing rain to water the crops which Israel will harvest for themselves or feed to their flocks. However, His blessing is contingent on obedience; God will keep His promises regarding the land and Israel only as they remain committed to a faithful and obedient relationship with God. When Israel rebels, as the Lord surely knows they will do, Israel will receive God’s curses.

Man’s purpose is to glorify God; we were created for His pleasure. Israel was God’s chosen people, set apart for relationship with Him. God is right to require obedience from His people because He is the Creator of all things. He has the power to establish boundaries, conditions, and guidelines for living in relationship with Him. By requiring obedience and offering blessings to His people, God establishes His worth as Creator and Sovereign Ruler over all things. Consequences for disobedience are God’s reminders to turn back to Him. Together, these blessings and curses spoken to Israel, who God knows will rebel against Him, demonstrate God’s love for His own. Even today, God offers spiritual blessings which we only enjoy in the context of a loving and obedient relationship with Him.



Understanding Legal Codes

The book of Deuteronomy, ancient Near Eastern law codes¹, and Jesus' teachings on the law converge in a complex tapestry of legal, historical, and spiritual understanding. Comparing these helps illuminate our grasp of the law's role and its fulfillment in the Gospel. There are five basic units of legal codes within Scripture:

- The Ten "Words" (Exodus 20:1-17)
- The Scroll of the Covenant (Exodus 21-23)
- The Priestly Regulations (Leviticus 1-16)
- Holiness Regulations (Leviticus 17-27)
- Deuteronomy Regulations (Deuteronomy 12-26)

Cultural Context

Exodus 31:18 says that the Ten Words² were inscribed by the finger of God. This differs from the law codes presented in surrounding cultures by emphasizing their divine nature and role. By contrast, the Code of Hammurabi was written by a king who ruled in Babylon in the 18th century BCE and was seen as wisdom within societal structures. Culturally, law codes were not meant to encompass every possible situation but meant to give structure to society through rules, regulations, and standards of justice.

Two main types of laws within the ancient Near East: (at the time of Deuteronomy)

Casuistic: Casuistic laws are case-by-case laws that present in a format of "if/then" giving stipulations in different circumstances. "The 'if' clause describes the case concerned, the 'then' clause describes the legal penalty for infractions³." These laws only apply to the specific people in the specific situation. These laws are hypothetical by nature and not legislatively binding⁴.

Apodictic: Apodictic laws are explicit laws that are laid out with a "do" or "do not" command. They are direct and widely applicable, must be done in every circumstance, and instruct the people within the society how they are supposed to fulfill their part of the covenant.

Historically

The **Ten Words** were the primary laws in which Israel was to abide. The rest of the laws presented in the Torah (the first five books of the Bible)⁵ are details of how God expected them to live as a people group in the ancient Near East. Israel believed that Yahweh spoke these words as a means of grace⁶ and would enable their society to flourish within the loving

1. Legal systems or traditions

2. The Bible never uses the term "ten commandments"; but in Exodus 34:28 uses the Hebrew term *eseret ha-devarim* meaning "ten words".

3. Klein, William W., et al. *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*. 3rd ed., Zondervan Academic, 2017. Pg 439.

4. Ancient Near Eastern laws were not codified and enforced by the legislative government. Rather they demonstrated wisdom for judges to consider and motivate justice and peace.

5. There are 613 laws mentioned in the Torah.

6. Psalm 119

covenant between God and Israel. He rescued them from Egypt and then offered guideposts on how to live abundantly through ongoing allegiance to Yahweh and love for one other. God initiated the covenant and Israel agreed to keep the Law out of grateful response to God. The law codes were not just legal stipulations but were tied to their theological beliefs and communal identity.

Jesus and the Law

The Torah is presented as one extensive unit and is not broken up into systematized categories such as civil, ceremonial, and moral laws. In Matthew 5:17-18, Jesus says he has not come to abolish the Law or the prophets, but to fulfill them. He fulfilled the entirety of the Law through His sinless life, death, resurrection, and ascension. In classic rabbinical teaching in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus deepens the meaning of the Law as He teaches people to internalize its principles, emphasizing the heart's condition over mere external compliance. Jesus highlighted the importance of mercy, compassion, and forgiveness, reflecting the core values of Deuteronomy but with an emphasis on grace that transcends legalistic observance⁷.

Jesus' sacrificial death and resurrection evoked the "new" covenant prophesied in Jeremiah 31:31-34 that would inscribe the Lord's commands on hearts and minds. The New Covenant that was anticipated and inaugurated in Jesus was built upon the framework of the previous covenants⁸ and is evident in the New Testament church. In Matthew 22:34-40, Jesus responds to an expert of the Law that the greatest command is to "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind...The second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself. All the Law and the Prophets depend on these two commands." The New Testament refers to this as the "Law of Christ"⁹ and suggests that the Old Testament Law has been mediated to us through Jesus and inevitably inscribed on our hearts as promised. We do not live under the Old Testament Law but above it, which is why it is described as a lamp to our feet and light to our path (Psalm 119:105).

To be clear, when you give your heart to Christ and turn from sin, you are filled fully with the Holy Spirit and equipped for service to God. The New Covenant and Law of Christ is divinely inscribed on your heart. **There is nothing we can do or say that will restore our relationship with God without first coming to Christ for salvation.** He is "the Way, the Truth, and the Life" and has done every ounce of work on our behalf when He nailed our sin to the cross and conquered death. As holy and set apart people, God seeks us and pursues us as part of His plan to restore humanity and creation. He has rescued you from captivity to sin, reconciled you to a right relationship with Him, calls you His treasured possession, and has marked you with a purpose to glorify Him and be salt and light to a watching world.

7. Matthew 23:23; Luke 11:42

8. Abrahamic Covenant (Genesis 12:1-3); Mosaic Covenant (Exodus 19-24); Davidic Covenant (2 Samuel 7:12-16); "New" Covenant (Jeremiah 31)

9. 1 Corinthians 9:21, Galatians 6:2, James 2:8



WEEK 10:

Deuteronomy 12-14

12 “Be careful to follow these statutes and ordinances in the land that the Lord, the God of your ancestors, has given you to possess all the days you live on the earth. ² Destroy completely all the places where the nations that you are driving out worship their gods—on the high mountains, on the hills, and under every green tree. ³ Tear down their altars, smash their sacred pillars, burn their Asherah poles, cut down the carved images of their gods, and wipe out their names from every place. ⁴ Don’t worship the Lord your God this way. ⁵ Instead, turn to the place the Lord your God chooses from all your tribes to put his name for his dwelling and go there. ⁶ You are to bring there your burnt offerings and sacrifices, your tenths and personal contributions, your vow offerings and freewill offerings, and the firstborn of your herds and flocks. ⁷ You will eat there in the presence of the Lord your God and rejoice with your household in everything you do, because the Lord your God has blessed you.

⁸ “You are not to do as we are doing here today; everyone is doing whatever seems right in his own sight. ⁹ Indeed, you have not yet come into the resting place and the inheritance the Lord your God is giving you. ¹⁰ When you cross the Jordan and live in the land the Lord your God is giving you to inherit, and he gives you rest from all the enemies around you and you live in security, ¹¹ then the Lord your God will choose the place to have his name dwell. Bring there everything I command you: your burnt offerings, sacrifices, offerings of the tenth, personal contributions, and all your choice offerings you vow to the Lord. ¹² You will rejoice before the Lord your God—you, your sons and daughters, your male and female

slaves, and the Levite who is within your city gates, since he has no portion or inheritance among you. ¹³ Be careful not to offer your burnt offerings in all the sacred places you see. ¹⁴ You must offer your burnt offerings only in the place the Lord chooses in one of your tribes, and there you must do everything I command you.

¹⁵ “But whenever you want, you may slaughter and eat meat within any of your city gates, according to the blessing the Lord your God has given you. Those who are clean or unclean may eat it, as they would a gazelle or deer, ¹⁶ but you must not eat the blood; pour it on the ground like water. ¹⁷ Within your city gates you may not eat the tenth of your grain, new wine, or fresh oil; the firstborn of your herd or flock; any of your vow offerings that you pledge; your freewill offerings; or your personal contributions. ¹⁸ You are to eat them in the presence of the Lord your God at the place the Lord your God chooses—you, your son and daughter, your male and female slave, and the Levite who is within your city gates. Rejoice before the Lord your God in everything you do, ¹⁹ and be careful not to neglect the Levite, as long as you live in your land.

²⁰ “When the Lord your God enlarges your territory as he has promised you, and you say, ‘I want to eat meat’ because you have a strong desire to eat meat, you may eat it whenever you want. ²¹ If the place where the Lord your God chooses to put his name is too far from you, you may slaughter any of your herd or flock he has given you, as I have commanded you, and you may eat it within your city gates whenever you want. ²² Indeed, you may eat it as the gazelle and deer are eaten; both the clean and the unclean may eat it. ²³ But don’t

eat the blood, since the blood is the life, and you must not eat the life with the meat. ²⁴ Do not eat blood; pour it on the ground like water. ²⁵ Do not eat it, so that you and your children after you will prosper, because you will be doing what is right in the Lord's sight.

²⁶ "But you are to take the holy offerings you have and your vow offerings and go to the place the Lord chooses. ²⁷ Present the meat and blood of your burnt offerings on the altar of the Lord your God. The blood of your other sacrifices is to be poured out beside the altar of the Lord your God, but you may eat the meat. ²⁸ Be careful to obey all these things I command you, so that you and your children after you may prosper forever, because you will be doing what is good and right in the sight of the Lord your God.

²⁹ "When the Lord your God annihilates the nations before you, which you are entering to take possession of, and you drive them out and live in their land, ³⁰ be careful not to be ensnared by their ways after they have been destroyed before you. Do not inquire about their gods, asking, 'How did these nations worship their gods? I'll also do the same.' ³¹ You must not do the same to the Lord your God, because they practice every detestable act, which the Lord hates, for their gods. They even burn their sons and daughters in the fire to their gods. ³² Be careful to do everything I command you; do not add anything to it or take anything away from it.

13 "If a prophet or someone who has dreams arises among you and proclaims a sign or wonder to you, ² and that sign or wonder he has promised you comes about, but he says, 'Let's follow other gods,' which you have not known, 'and let's worship them,' ³ do not listen to that prophet's words or to that dreamer. For the Lord your God is testing you to know whether you love the Lord your God with all your heart and all your soul. ⁴ You must follow the Lord your God and fear him. You must keep his commands and listen

to him; you must worship him and remain faithful to him. ⁵ That prophet or dreamer must be put to death, because he has urged rebellion against the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt and redeemed you from the place of slavery, to turn you from the way the Lord your God has commanded you to walk. You must purge the evil from you.

⁶ "If your brother, the son of your mother, or your son or daughter, or the wife you embrace, or your closest friend secretly entices you, saying, 'Let's go and worship other gods'—which neither you nor your ancestors have known, ⁷ any of the gods of the peoples around you, near you or far from you, from one end of the earth to the other— ⁸ do not yield to him or listen to him. Show him no pity, and do not spare him or shield him. ⁹ Instead, you must kill him. Your hand is to be the first against him to put him to death, and then the hands of all the people. ¹⁰ Stone him to death for trying to turn you away from the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the place of slavery. ¹¹ All Israel will hear and be afraid, and they will no longer do anything evil like this among you.

¹² "If you hear it said about one of your cities the Lord your God is giving you to live in, ¹³ that wicked men have sprung up among you, led the inhabitants of their city astray, and said, 'Let's go and worship other gods,' which you have not known, ¹⁴ you are to inquire, investigate, and interrogate thoroughly. If the report turns out to be true that this detestable act has been done among you, ¹⁵ you must strike down the inhabitants of that city with the sword. Completely destroy everyone in it as well as its livestock with the sword. ¹⁶ You are to gather all its spoil in the middle of the city square and completely burn the city and all its spoil for the Lord your God. The city is to remain a mound of ruins forever; it is not to be rebuilt. ¹⁷ Nothing set apart for destruction is to remain in your hand, so that the Lord will turn from his burning anger and grant you mercy, show you compassion, and multiply you as he swore to your ancestors. ¹⁸ This will

occur if you obey the Lord your God, keeping all his commands I am giving you today, doing what is right in the sight of the Lord your God.

14 “You are sons of the Lord your God; do not cut yourselves or make a bald spot on your head on behalf of the dead, ² for you are a holy people belonging to the Lord your God. The Lord has chosen you to be his own possession out of all the peoples on the face of the earth.

³ “You must not eat any detestable thing. ⁴ These are the animals you may eat:

oxen, sheep, goats,

⁵ deer, gazelles, roe deer, wild goats, ibexes, antelopes, and mountain sheep.

⁶ You may eat any animal that has hooves divided in two and chews the cud. ⁷ But among the ones that chew the cud or have divided hooves, you are not to eat these:

camels, hares, and hyraxes, though they chew the cud, they do not have hooves—

they are unclean for you;

⁸ and pigs, though they have hooves, they do not chew the cud— they are unclean for you.

Do not eat their meat or touch their carcasses.

⁹ “You may eat everything from the water that has fins and scales, ¹⁰ but you may not eat anything that does not have fins and scales—it is unclean for you.

¹¹ “You may eat every clean bird, ¹² but these are the ones you may not eat:

eagles, bearded vultures, black vultures, ¹³ the kites, any kind of falcon,

¹⁴ every kind of raven, ¹⁵ ostriches, short-eared owls, gulls, any kind of hawk,

¹⁶ little owls, long-eared owls, barn owls, ¹⁷ eagle owls, ospreys, cormorants, ¹⁸ storks,

any kind of heron, hoopoes, and bats.

¹⁹ All winged insects are unclean for you; they may not be eaten. ²⁰ But you may eat every clean flying creature.

²¹ “You are not to eat any carcass; you may give it to a resident alien within your city gates, and he may eat it, or you may sell it to a foreigner. For you are a holy people belonging to the Lord your God. Do not boil a young goat in its mother’s milk.

²² “Each year you are to set aside a tenth of all the produce grown in your fields. ²³ You are to eat a tenth of your grain, new wine, and fresh oil, and the firstborn of your herd and flock, in the presence of the Lord your God at the place where he chooses to have his name dwell, so that you will always learn to fear the Lord your God. ²⁴ But if the distance is too great for you to carry it, since the place where the Lord your God chooses to put his name is too far away from you and since the Lord your God has blessed you, ²⁵ then exchange it for silver, take the silver in your hand, and go to the place the Lord your God chooses. ²⁶ You may spend the silver on anything you want: cattle, sheep, goats, wine, beer, or anything you desire. You are to feast there in the presence of the Lord your God and rejoice with your family. ²⁷ Do not neglect the Levite within your city gates, since he has no portion or inheritance among you.

²⁸ “At the end of every three years, bring a tenth of all your produce for that year and store it within your city gates. ²⁹ Then the Levite, who has no portion or inheritance among you, the resident alien, the fatherless, and the widow within your city gates may come, eat, and be satisfied. And the Lord your God will bless you in all the work of your hands that you do.

Things to ponder:

Summarize the passage in your own words:

What questions do you have?

Deuteronomy 12:1-32

What are some of the specific instructions Moses gives Israel regarding worship?

Find and circle the word “rejoice” in this chapter. What does this teach us about worship?

How do we as God’s people benefit from scheduled and intentional corporate worship?

What do you understand about the significance of blood? Why was Israel specifically instructed not to eat it? (See Leviticus 17:10-12, Exodus 12:13, Matthew 26:28, and Ephesians 1:7 for help.)

Why do you think worship laws are the first standards God establishes here? Why doesn't God allow the people to establish their own worship preferences?

Deuteronomy 13:1-18

Define idolatry.

What warnings regarding idolatry are presented to Israel in this chapter?

How was Israel to respond to these potential threats?

Why do you think they were instructed to take such drastic action in these situations?

What entices us away from God? How might we be guilty of worshipping something other than Him?

Deuteronomy 14:1-29

How do verses 1-2 describe Israel's relationship with God?

What does it mean to be "holy"?

What are some of the standards established for Israel in this chapter?

What is God's purpose for setting these standards?

Do you think God's standards for living are reasonable?

How do your standards compare with God's standards for you?

Reflections:

Having built the case for obedience as a response to God's faithfulness, Moses instructs Israel how to live as God's chosen people. Moses first addresses God's standards for worship. The nations living in Canaan were pagan people who worshiped false gods in many temples, offering whatever they pleased through immoral practices. In contrast, Israel was instructed to establish one central place of worship, to bring specific offerings and tithes to worship, and to destroy absolutely everything having to do with false gods in order to avoid the temptation of incorporating these practices into their worship of the one true God. Our holy God is worthy of receiving worship according to the standards He has established for His people. Worship is intended to be a time of rejoicing as we come together as a believing community to reflect on God's goodness and faithfulness to us.

Israel was instructed to bring specific animals to the altar as offerings, but they were also allowed to kill animals for food as long as they drained all the blood from the meat. Blood had special significance for the people of Israel. During the first Passover in Egypt, God instructed Israel to paint blood on their door frames to protect their firstborn sons from death (Exodus 12). At the tabernacle during their years in the wilderness, blood was either poured out beside the altar or collected from the animals they sacrificed. The collected blood was used in a variety of ways: it was applied to the horns of the altar, spattered on the altar, or poured on the mercy seat of the ark of the covenant to make atonement for the Israelites' sin. God's standards regarding animal blood foreshadowed Jesus' blood which was shed for the forgiveness of all who believe in Him.

Idolatry is worshiping and giving our affection to something other than God, allowing it to take God's rightful place in our lives. Anything we prioritize over God is an idol - family, money, comfort, success, etc. Our pluralistic culture today values independent truth and personal choice, but God set specific standards of worship for His people. Moses warns the people of Israel to beware of false prophets, close family or friends, and even entire crowds which might draw them away from right worship of the true God. Israel was instructed to put these people to death which reminds us that our relationship with God is of primary importance.

Moses reminds Israel in Deuteronomy 14:2 that they are "a holy people belonging to the Lord your God." To be holy means to be set apart. Israel needed to learn the differences between themselves and pagan nations, so God gave them instructions regarding "clean" and "unclean" foods. Some scholars believe these food distinctions were related to pagan rituals and taught Israel discernment between pagan and godly practices. God also gave instructions on tithing to teach the people generosity and to remind them that God is their provider. God's standards for worship trained Israel to see themselves as set apart from the pagan nations and gave them opportunities to practice living in obedience to God's instruction.



WEEK 11:

Deuteronomy 15:1-16:17

15 “At the end of every seven years you must cancel debts. ² This is how to cancel debt: Every creditor is to cancel what he has lent his neighbor. He is not to collect anything from his neighbor or brother, because the Lord’s release of debts has been proclaimed. ³ You may collect something from a foreigner, but you must forgive whatever your brother owes you.

⁴ “There will be no poor among you, however, because the Lord is certain to bless you in the land the Lord your God is giving you to possess as an inheritance— ⁵ if only you obey the Lord your God and are careful to follow every one of these commands I am giving you today. ⁶ When the Lord your God blesses you as he has promised you, you will lend to many nations but not borrow; you will rule many nations, but they will not rule you.

⁷ “If there is a poor person among you, one of your brothers within any of your city gates in the land the Lord your God is giving you, do not be hardhearted or tightfisted toward your poor brother. ⁸ Instead, you are to open your hand to him and freely loan him enough for whatever need he has. ⁹ Be careful that there isn’t this wicked thought in your heart, ‘The seventh year, the year of canceling debts, is near,’ and you are stingy toward your poor brother and give him nothing. He will cry out to the Lord against you, and you will be guilty. ¹⁰ Give to him, and don’t have a stingy heart when you give, and because of this the Lord your God will bless you in all your work and in everything you do. ¹¹ For there will never cease to be poor people in the land; that is why I am commanding you, ‘Open your hand willingly to your poor and needy brother in your land.’

¹² “If your fellow Hebrew, a man or woman, is sold to you and serves you six years, you must set him free in the seventh year. ¹³ When you set him free, do not send him away empty-handed. ¹⁴ Give generously to him from your flock, your threshing floor, and your winepress. You are to give him whatever the Lord your God has blessed you with. ¹⁵ Remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt and the Lord your God redeemed you; that is why I am giving you this command today. ¹⁶ But if your slave says to you, ‘I don’t want to leave you,’ because he loves you and your family, and is well off with you, ¹⁷ take an awl and pierce through his ear into the door, and he will become your slave for life. Also treat your female slave the same way. ¹⁸ Do not regard it as a hardship when you set him free, because he worked for you six years—worth twice the wages of a hired worker. Then the Lord your God will bless you in everything you do.

¹⁹ “Consecrate to the Lord your God every firstborn male produced by your herd and flock. You are not to put the firstborn of your oxen to work or shear the firstborn of your flock. ²⁰ Each year you and your family are to eat it before the Lord your God in the place the Lord chooses. ²¹ But if there is a defect in the animal, if it is lame or blind or has any serious defect, you may not sacrifice it to the Lord your God. ²² Eat it within your city gates; both the unclean person and the clean may eat it, as though it were a gazelle or deer. ²³ But you must not eat its blood; pour it on the ground like water.

16 “Set aside the month of Abib and observe the Passover to the Lord your God, because the Lord your God brought

you out of Egypt by night in the month of Abib.² Sacrifice to the Lord your God a Passover animal from the herd or flock in the place where the Lord chooses to have his name dwell.³ Do not eat leavened bread with it. For seven days you are to eat unleavened bread with it, the bread of hardship—because you left the land of Egypt in a hurry—so that you may remember for the rest of your life the day you left the land of Egypt.⁴ No yeast is to be found anywhere in your territory for seven days, and none of the meat you sacrifice in the evening of the first day is to remain until morning.⁵ You are not to sacrifice the Passover animal in any of the towns the Lord your God is giving you.⁶ Sacrifice the Passover animal only at the place where the Lord your God chooses to have his name dwell. Do this in the evening as the sun sets at the same time of day you departed from Egypt.⁷ You are to cook and eat it in the place the Lord your God chooses, and you are to return to your tents in the morning.⁸ Eat unleavened bread for six days. On the seventh day there is to be a solemn assembly to the Lord your God; do not do any work.

⁹ “You are to count seven weeks, counting the weeks from the time the sickle is first put to the standing grain.¹⁰ You are to celebrate the Festival of Weeks to the Lord your God with a freewill offering that you give in proportion to how the Lord your God has blessed you.¹¹ Rejoice before the Lord your God in the place where he chooses to have his name dwell—you, your son and daughter, your male and female slave, the Levite within your city gates, as well as the resident alien, the fatherless, and the widow among you.¹² Remember that you were slaves in Egypt; carefully follow these statutes.

¹³ “You are to celebrate the Festival of Shelters for seven days when you have gathered in everything from your threshing floor and winepress.¹⁴ Rejoice during your festival—you, your son and daughter, your male and female slave, as well as the Levite, the resident alien, the fatherless, and the widow within your city gates.¹⁵ You are to hold a seven-day festival for the Lord your God in the place he chooses,

because the Lord your God will bless you in all your produce and in all the work of your hands, and you will have abundant joy.

¹⁶ “All your males are to appear three times a year before the Lord your God in the place he chooses: at the Festival of Unleavened Bread, the Festival of Weeks, and the Festival of Shelters. No one is to appear before the Lord empty-handed.¹⁷ Everyone must appear with a gift suited to his means, according to the blessing the Lord your God has given you.

Things to ponder:

Summarize the passage in your own words:

What questions do you have?

Deuteronomy 15:1-18

What specific commands does God make to Israel related to caring for the poor among them?

What benefits to their faith might Israel experience if they follow these commands?

How do verses 4-6 describe Israel’s ideal future if they obey the Lord? Did Israel achieve this future?

In what ways was slavery among the Israelites different than how we might understand slavery today?

How were slaves in Israel to be treated?

What experiences have you had related to caring for the poor or receiving care in your own poverty?

What connections do you see between God's instructions in these verses and God's redemption of people from sin?

Deuteronomy 15:19-16:17

Why was Israel required to set aside their firstborn male animals? (See Exodus 12-13.)

Which instructions did these three feasts have in common?

What was Israel to remember or celebrate in each of these feasts?

Festival of Passover:

Festival of Weeks (also called Pentecost):

Festival of Shelters:

How does Moses' repeated instruction - to celebrate these feasts in the place where the Lord their God chooses to have His name dwell - glorify God? How would this practice benefit the people?

These festivals of worship required tithing to God out of gratitude for what He had done. In what ways do you give to God in gratitude for redeeming and providing for you?

Reflections:

Deuteronomy 15 addresses how the people of Israel should act toward one another as God's chosen people. Moses' first instructions are related to the sabbath year. God established the seventh day for rest at creation and in His commandments, but He also set aside every seventh year as a sabbath year of rest in which Israel would leave their fields unused and their crops unharvested (Exodus 23:10-11). Israel would not earn money from their crops during this year, making debts difficult to pay. Moses commands Israel to cancel debts of their fellow Israelites during the sabbath year. Scholars disagree on how this cancellation was practiced, but two common thoughts include debts being completely forgiven or payments being suspended only during the sabbath year. The very poor who could not afford payments could settle debts by selling themselves as a slave, offering free labor to the person they owed. Moses instructed Israel to release slaves during the sabbath year, considering their debt paid. The year of sabbath was a test of Israel's trust in God to provide for their needs as fields lay fallow and unharvested. It also balanced economic scales by offering a merciful break from financial burdens to the borrower. These commands reflect the redemption believers receive through Jesus Christ whose death on the cross freed us from our debt and slavery to sin, and they call us to live generously with each other.

God also instructed Israel to be generous toward Him by setting apart all firstborn male animals from their flocks and herds for Him. Of these firstborn males, clean animals without defects were offered to the Lord on the altar at the temple during festivals, clean animals with defects could be eaten, and unclean animals (such as donkeys) could be redeemed with a clean animal and used for work or their neck had to be broken. Setting aside animals in these ways grew Israel's trust and reminded them that God is their provider.

Moses then instructs Israel to set aside specific times as Festivals for sacrificing to the Lord at the temple (or tabernacle) altar. Passover celebrates the exodus from Egypt and remembers the night firstborn males were protected from death by the blood of a spotless lamb. Passover pointed forward to Jesus, the spotless Lamb of God whose perfect sacrifice satisfied God's wrath, redeemed us from sin, and put an end to all subsequent sacrifices. Passover was followed immediately by the week-long Festival of Unleavened Bread during which time Israel removed yeast from their homes as a reminder to remove sin from their lives. The Festival of Weeks, also called Pentecost, was celebrated fifty days after Passover as a time of rejoicing for the wheat harvest. Pentecost pointed forward to the Holy Spirit who came after Jesus ascended to heaven, providing a "harvest" of believers into the early church. The Feast of Shelters was celebrated at the end of all the harvests and was a time for Israel to remember how God had generously supported them during their wilderness journey before entering the Promised Land.



WEEK 12:

Deuteronomy 16:18-18:22

¹⁸ “Appoint judges and officials for your tribes in all your towns the Lord your God is giving you. They are to judge the people with righteous judgment. ¹⁹ Do not deny justice or show partiality to anyone. Do not accept a bribe, for it blinds the eyes of the wise and twists the words of the righteous. ²⁰ Pursue justice and justice alone, so that you will live and possess the land the Lord your God is giving you.

²¹ “Do not set up an Asherah of any kind of wood next to the altar you will build for the Lord your God, ²² and do not set up a sacred pillar; the Lord your God hates them.

17 “Do not sacrifice to the Lord your God an ox or sheep with a defect or any serious flaw, for that is detestable to the Lord your God.

² “If a man or woman among you in one of your towns that the Lord your God will give you is discovered doing evil in the sight of the Lord your God and violating his covenant ³ and has gone to serve other gods by bowing in worship to the sun, moon, or all the stars in the sky—which I have forbidden— ⁴ and if you are told or hear about it, then investigate it thoroughly. If the report turns out to be true that this detestable act has been done in Israel, ⁵ you are to bring out to your city gates that man or woman who has done this evil thing and stone them to death. ⁶ The one condemned to die is to be executed on the testimony of two or three witnesses. No one is to be executed on the testimony of a single witness. ⁷ The witnesses’ hands are to be the first in putting him to death, and after that, the hands of all the people. You must purge the evil from you.

⁸ “If a case is too difficult for you—concerning bloodshed, lawsuits, or assaults—cases disputed at your city gates, then go up to the place the Lord your God chooses. ⁹ You are to go to the Levitical priests and to the judge who presides at that time. Ask, and they will give you a verdict in the case. ¹⁰ You must abide by the verdict they give you at the place the Lord chooses. Be careful to do exactly as they instruct you. ¹¹ You must abide by the instruction they give you and the verdict they announce to you. Do not turn to the right or the left from the decision they declare to you.

¹² The person who acts arrogantly, refusing to listen either to the priest who stands there serving the Lord your God or to the judge, must die. You must purge the evil from Israel. ¹³ Then all the people will hear about it, be afraid, and no longer behave arrogantly.

¹⁴ “When you enter the land the Lord your God is giving you, take possession of it, live in it, and say, ‘I will set a king over me like all the nations around me,’ ¹⁵ you are to appoint over you the king the Lord your God chooses. Appoint a king from your brothers. You are not to set a foreigner over you, or one who is not of your people. ¹⁶ However, he must not acquire many horses for himself or send the people back to Egypt to acquire many horses, for the Lord has told you, ‘You are never to go back that way again.’ ¹⁷ He must not acquire many wives for himself so that his heart won’t go astray. He must not acquire very large amounts of silver and gold for himself. ¹⁸ When he is seated on his royal throne, he is to write a copy of this instruction for himself on a scroll in the presence of the Levitical priests. ¹⁹ It is to remain with him, and he is to read from it all the days of his life, so that he may

learn to fear the Lord his God, to observe all the words of this instruction, and to do these statutes. ²⁰ Then his heart will not be exalted above his countrymen, he will not turn from this command to the right or the left, and he and his sons will continue reigning many years in Israel.

18 “The Levitical priests, the whole tribe of Levi, will have no portion or inheritance with Israel. They will eat the Lord’s food offerings; that is their inheritance. ² Although Levi has no inheritance among his brothers, the Lord is his inheritance, as he promised him. ³ This is the priests’ share from the people who offer a sacrifice, whether it is an ox, a sheep, or a goat; the priests are to be given the shoulder, jaws, and stomach. ⁴ You are to give him the firstfruits of your grain, new wine, and fresh oil, and the first sheared wool of your flock. ⁵ For the Lord your God has chosen him and his sons from all your tribes to stand and minister in his name from now on. ⁶ When a Levite leaves one of your towns in Israel where he was staying and wants to go to the place the Lord chooses, ⁷ he may serve in the name of the Lord his God like all his fellow Levites who minister there in the presence of the Lord. ⁸ They will eat equal portions besides what he has received from the sale of the family estate.

⁹ “When you enter the land the Lord your God is giving you, do not imitate the detestable customs of those nations. ¹⁰ No one among you is to sacrifice his son or daughter in the fire, practice divination, tell fortunes, interpret omens, practice sorcery, ¹¹ cast spells, consult a medium or a spiritist, or inquire of the dead. ¹² Everyone who does these acts is detestable to the Lord, and the Lord your God is driving out the nations before you because of these detestable acts. ¹³ You must be blameless before the Lord your God. ¹⁴ Though these nations you are about to drive out listen to fortune-tellers and diviners, the Lord your God has not permitted you to do this.

¹⁵ “The Lord your God will raise up for you

a prophet like me from among your own brothers. You must listen to him. ¹⁶ This is what you requested from the Lord your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly when you said, ‘Let us not continue to hear the voice of the Lord our God or see this great fire any longer, so that we will not die!’ ¹⁷ Then the Lord said to me, ‘They have spoken well. ¹⁸ I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers. I will put my words in his mouth, and he will tell them everything I command him. ¹⁹ I will hold accountable whoever does not listen to my words that he speaks in my name. ²⁰ But the prophet who presumes to speak a message in my name that I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods—that prophet must die.’ ²¹ You may say to yourself, ‘How can we recognize a message the Lord has not spoken?’ ²² When a prophet speaks in the Lord’s name, and the message does not come true or is not fulfilled, that is a message the Lord has not spoken. The prophet has spoken it presumptuously. Do not be afraid of him.

Deuteronomy 16:18-17:13

How would the appointment of judges affect Israel's success in possessing the land?

What does it mean to "follow justice and justice alone"?

Verse 17:1 implies there were issues within the sacrificial system. In what ways do we offer God an imperfect or blemished sacrifice? How can we adhere to His command of offering the best of our time, money, and talents?

Who are people that you look to for leadership and guidance?
How do they emulate God's Word and ways?

Deuteronomy 17:14-17:20

With God’s sovereignty in mind, observe how v14 is phrased. How did God work within human desires to accomplish His will? It may be helpful to define sovereignty.

Explain the benefits the king would experience while carrying and reading God’s law. How would this affect the people of Israel?

How are you tempted to measure your success through the world’s standards rather than God’s?

Deuteronomy 18:1-18:8

What is required of the priests?

How is the community supposed to care for the priesthood?

How can we honor modern day ministers, shepherds, and overseers?

Deuteronomy 18:9-18:22

What practices were forbidden by the Lord?

How might these be misused based on social economics and status?

In what ways are you tempted to grasp for control in your life rather than rely on God's accessibility and sovereignty?

Reflections:

Directed by God, Moses continues to edify and command the Israelites with strict parameters on how one was to behave within a society steeped in “normative” ungodly practices. Within this section, Moses breaks down four major institutions of Israel: the judicial (Dt. 16:18-17:13), royal (Dt. 17:14-20), priestly (Dt. 18:1-13), and prophetic offices (Dt. 18:14-22). Notice that each of these offices is ascribed to Christ in the New Testament.

However, before Christ, the Israelites would need to continue with a model of leadership that would allow for justice and mercy. Deuteronomy 1:9-18 recounts Jethro, Moses’ father-in-law, offering a system to divide the burden of caring for the nation of Israel alone. Wise, qualified, and fair leaders were recommended to bring about peace and justice to the land (Exodus 18). These basic character values of the judges were also expected of all Israelites. Moses recalibrates a system that is already in place to accommodate the addition of cities through the dispersion of the Israelites as they enter the Promised Land. They would now hold court in the local cities, but if a decision could not be made, they would bring it to the Levitical priests and judges (Deuteronomy 17:8-13). The parameters on how Israel was to worship is sandwiched between the appointment and adherence to judges and priests. Small daily choices become who we are. What we worship, even unknowingly, either transforms or deforms us (Ephesians 2:1-10). God placed what we worship within the context of who leads us all while pointing to His heart of justice.

As for the royal office, monarchy and kingship were foreign concepts to the nation of Israel, yet as they immersed themselves into the Promised Land without properly driving out the current people, they would fall prey to the cognitive environment and norms that pervaded their society. Although God was the king of Israel, they would eventually beg for another king as they looked at the geopolitical terrain and successes of their enemies (1 Samuel 8). Kingship was introduced in Israel only under Saul and David, which inevitably led to the segregation of the Israelite kingdoms after King Rehoboam forced harsh labor on the people (1 Kings 12). As God established leaders of His people, He was always redirecting their eyes back to Him. The king of Israel was to carry a copy of the Law at all times, reading it daily, following all the commands of the Lord (Deuteronomy 17:18). This would guard the king from pride, idolatry, and the natural inclination to misuse power at the expense of the oppressed.

In the ancient world you could hire someone to send a message to the “gods” to gain understanding about your circumstances through specific sacrifices. Due to the natural human desire to control God through religious rituals, God was prohibiting Israel from copying the practices of their pagan neighbors who would lead them to attempt manipulation of God. He had already given them specific rituals and access to Him. They did not need to follow the culture’s false sacrificial system which was also only available to the richest people who had monetary resources. God was available to all of Israel, if they would humbly follow His rules and walk in His ways.

Specifically, God would raise up prophets that could be verified as the mouthpiece of God. Stephen uses v.15 in Acts 7:37 to support the notion that Jesus Christ was the Son of God. While Israel would not understand this reality until much later, God would graciously provide prophets until the time of Christ to preach justice, mercy, and faithfulness.

Because Christ is our perfect judge, king, priest, and prophet, we can boldly come before the throne of God. He now elevates us to a status of priest: we serve as mediators between God and a watching world. We are to embody His characteristics of peace and justice as we walk in His ways and point people to a good and faithful God. It is not only what we believe that matters but how we practice it.



WEEK 13:

Deuteronomy 19-20

19 “When the Lord your God annihilates the nations whose land he is giving you, so that you drive them out and live in their cities and houses, ² you are to set apart three cities for yourselves within the land the Lord your God is giving you to possess. ³ You are to determine the distances and divide the land the Lord your God is granting you as an inheritance into three regions, so that anyone who commits manslaughter can flee to these cities.

⁴ “Here is the law concerning a case of someone who kills a person and flees there to save his life, having killed his neighbor accidentally without previously hating him: ⁵ If, for example, he goes into the forest with his neighbor to cut timber, and his hand swings the ax to chop down a tree, but the blade flies off the handle and strikes his neighbor so that he dies, that person may flee to one of these cities and live. ⁶ Otherwise, the avenger of blood in the heat of his anger might pursue the one who committed manslaughter, overtake him because the distance is great, and strike him dead. Yet he did not deserve to die, since he did not previously hate his neighbor. ⁷ This is why I am commanding you to set apart three cities for yourselves. ⁸ If the Lord your God enlarges your territory as he swore to your ancestors, and gives you all the land he promised to give them— ⁹ provided you keep every one of these commands I am giving you today and follow them, loving the Lord your God and walking in his ways at all times—you are to add three more cities to these three. ¹⁰ In this way, innocent blood will not be shed, and you will not become guilty of bloodshed in the land the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance. ¹¹ But if someone hates his

neighbor, lies in ambush for him, attacks him, and strikes him fatally, and flees to one of these cities, ¹² the elders of his city are to send for him, take him from there, and hand him over to the avenger of blood and he will die. ¹³ Do not look on him with pity but purge from Israel the guilt of shedding innocent blood, and you will prosper.

¹⁴ “Do not move your neighbor’s boundary marker, established at the start in the inheritance you will receive in the land the Lord your God is giving you to possess.

¹⁵ “One witness cannot establish any iniquity or sin against a person, whatever that person has done. A fact must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.

¹⁶ “If a malicious witness testifies against someone accusing him of a crime, ¹⁷ the two people in the dispute are to stand in the presence of the Lord before the priests and judges in authority at that time. ¹⁸ The judges are to make a careful investigation, and if the witness turns out to be a liar who has falsely accused his brother, ¹⁹ you must do to him as he intended to do to his brother. You must purge the evil from you. ²⁰ Then everyone else will hear and be afraid, and they will never again do anything evil like this among you. ²¹ Do not show pity: life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, and foot for foot.

20 “When you go out to war against your enemies and see horses, chariots, and an army larger than yours, do not be afraid of them, for the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, is with you. ² When you are about to engage in battle, the priest is to come forward and address the army. ³ He is to say to them, ‘Listen, Israel:

Today you are about to engage in battle with your enemies. Do not be cowardly. Do not be afraid, alarmed, or terrified because of them. ⁴ For the Lord your God is the one who goes with you to fight for you against your enemies to give you victory.'

⁵ "The officers are to address the army, 'Has any man built a new house and not dedicated it? Let him leave and return home. Otherwise, he may die in battle and another man dedicate it. ⁶ Has any man planted a vineyard and not begun to enjoy its fruit? Let him leave and return home. Otherwise he may die in battle and another man enjoy its fruit. ⁷ Has any man become engaged to a woman and not married her? Let him leave and return home. Otherwise he may die in battle and another man marry her.' ⁸ The officers will continue to address the army and say, 'Is there any man who is afraid or cowardly? Let him leave and return home, so that his brothers won't lose heart as he did.'⁹ When the officers have finished addressing the army, they will appoint military commanders to lead it.

¹⁰ "When you approach a city to fight against it, make an offer of peace. ¹¹ If it accepts your offer of peace and opens its gates to you, all the people found in it will become forced laborers for you and serve you. ¹² However, if it does not make peace with you but wages war against you, lay siege to it. ¹³ When the Lord your God hands it over to you, strike down all its males with the sword. ¹⁴ But you may take the women, dependents, animals, and whatever else is in the city—all its spoil—as plunder. You may enjoy the spoil of your enemies that the Lord your God has given you. ¹⁵ This is how you are to treat all the cities that are far away from you and are not among the cities of these nations. ¹⁶ However, you must not let any living thing survive among the cities of these people the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance. ¹⁷ You must completely destroy them—the Hethite, Amorite, Canaanite, Perizzite, Hivite, and Jebusite—as the Lord your God has commanded you, ¹⁸ so that they won't teach you to do all the detestable acts

they do for their gods, and you sin against the Lord your God.

¹⁹ "When you lay siege to a city for a long time, fighting against it in order to capture it, do not destroy its trees by putting an ax to them, because you can get food from them. Do not cut them down. Are trees of the field human, to come under siege by you? ²⁰ But you may destroy the trees that you know do not produce food. You may cut them down to build siege works against the city that is waging war against you, until it falls.

Deuteronomy 19:1-13

In your own words, describe the purpose of cities of refuge for Israel.

Based on this instruction, how do you think God views our mistakes?

Why did the person who accidentally killed someone have to remain in the city of refuge until the High priest's death?

In what ways is this similar and in what ways is this different from Jesus' death for us?

What was the consequence for premeditated murder?
Why would God establish such severe consequences for this crime?

Deuteronomy 19:14-21

Why would God establish laws regarding property and court witnesses?
What do these laws reveal about the human heart?

How might the law about boundary markers apply to your life today?

What do you think is the point of “life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, and foot for foot”? What gets in the way of legal systems today having this kind of impartiality?

Deuteronomy 20:1-20

What was the priest to say to Israel before heading into battle, and how would this encourage them?

Which men were allowed to return home rather than going out to fight?

What does this teach you about God and how He views your fears and home responsibilities?

What were the differences in how Israel was to approach cities within the Promised Land and cities at a distance from the Promised Land?

Reflections:

God is both perfectly just and perfectly merciful; He punishes sin while also offering compassion toward our human condition. In many ways, we can read the commands given in Deuteronomy 19-20 as specific and practical guidelines for Israel to address the sins of murder, coveting, lying, and idolatry in ways that honor and reflect God's justice and mercy.

Moses gives God's commands for cities of refuge. With no police force to enforce laws, the family of a person who was killed might seek their own vengeance. The murderer, whether it was intentional or accidental, could seek protection in a city of refuge until the case could be heard by the proper authorities. A true murderer would be handed over to "the avenger of death" (typically the victim's family) to be put to death. An accidental murderer would suffer the consequence of remaining in the city of refuge until the high priest's death, which signifies one life given to atone for another in a similar way that Jesus' life was given to atone for us.

Moses addresses lying by giving regulations related to boundary stones for personal property and accusations against another person in a court proceeding. Everything we have, and everything we are as humans made in God's image, is a gift from God, and He sets boundaries to protect both our property and our reputations. His consequences for wrong behavior are just. "Eye for eye, tooth for tooth..." exhibits payment equal to the offense; no more and no less.

Finally, Moses addresses the coming wars that Israel would face. While God had promised this land to Israel, they would have to follow Him in obedience and fight against their enemies. War is terrifying, but Moses commands the priests to encourage the army by reminding them before battle that "the Lord your God is the one who goes with you to fight for you against your enemies to give you victory." Even still, God knows there are many who WILL fear or who will feel torn about leaving a new wife or home or vineyard to go to war. Fear is contagious, and distractions remove our attention from the task at hand. God looks on these circumstances with compassion and mercifully allows for the fearful and the distracted to remain at home rather than to go fight.

God offers mercy to cities outside the boundaries of the Promised Land and allows Israel to offer an agreement of peace with these cities in which the people will be taken captive to serve Israel. This allows these people the opportunity to live among the Israelites and to learn about their God; this is God offering idol worshippers the opportunity to enter into relationship with Him. But the cities within the Promised Land are not to be given this opportunity for mercy. God has determined that their wickedness is to be ended through complete obliteration. In this way, these wars are "holy wars" led by God through the people of Israel to bring an end to the Canaanites' sin and rebellion. God demonstrates both justice and mercy in His commands regarding these enemy cities.



WEEK 14:

Deuteronomy 21-22

21 “If a murder victim is found lying in a field in the land the Lord your God is giving you to possess, and it is not known who killed him, ² your elders and judges are to come out and measure the distance from the victim to the nearby cities. ³ The elders of the city nearest to the victim are to get a young cow that has not been yoked or used for work. ⁴ The elders of that city will bring the cow down to a continually flowing stream, to a place not tilled or sown, and they will break its neck there by the stream. ⁵ Then the priests, the sons of Levi, will come forward, for the Lord your God has chosen them to serve him and pronounce blessings in his name, and they are to give a ruling in every dispute and case of assault. ⁶ All the elders of the city nearest to the victim will wash their hands by the stream over the young cow whose neck has been broken. ⁷ They will declare, ‘Our hands did not shed this blood; our eyes did not see it. ⁸ Lord, wipe away the guilt of your people Israel whom you redeemed, and do not hold the shedding of innocent blood against them.’ Then the responsibility for bloodshed will be wiped away from them. ⁹ You must purge from yourselves the guilt of shedding innocent blood, for you will be doing what is right in the Lord’s sight.

¹⁰ “When you go to war against your enemies and the Lord your God hands them over to you and you take some of them prisoner, and ¹¹ if you see a beautiful woman among the captives, desire her, and want to take her as your wife, ¹² you are to bring her into your house. She is to shave her head, trim her nails, ¹³ remove the clothes she was wearing when she was taken prisoner, live in your house, and mourn for her father and mother a full month. After that, you may have sexual relations with her and be her

husband, and she will be your wife. ¹⁴ Then if you are not satisfied with her, you are to let her go where she wants, but you must not sell her or treat her as merchandise, because you have humiliated her.

¹⁵ “If a man has two wives, one loved and the other neglected, and both the loved and the neglected bear him sons, and if the neglected wife has the firstborn son, ¹⁶ when that man gives what he has to his sons as an inheritance, he is not to show favoritism to the son of the loved wife as his firstborn over the firstborn of the neglected wife. ¹⁷ He must acknowledge the firstborn, the son of the neglected wife, by giving him two shares of his estate, for he is the firstfruits of his virility; he has the rights of the firstborn.

¹⁸ “If a man has a stubborn and rebellious son who does not obey his father or mother and doesn’t listen to them even after they discipline him, ¹⁹ his father and mother are to take hold of him and bring him to the elders of his city, to the gate of his hometown. ²⁰ They will say to the elders of his city, ‘This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious; he doesn’t obey us. He’s a glutton and a drunkard.’ ²¹ Then all the men of his city will stone him to death. You must purge the evil from you, and all Israel will hear and be afraid.

²² “If anyone is found guilty of an offense deserving the death penalty and is executed, and you hang his body on a tree, ²³ you are not to leave his corpse on the tree overnight but are to bury him that day, for anyone hung on a tree is under God’s curse. You must not defile the land the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance.

22

“If you see your brother Israelite’s ox or sheep straying, do not ignore it; make sure you return it to your brother. ² If your brother does not live near you or you don’t know him, you are to bring the animal to your home to remain with you until your brother comes looking for it; then you can return it to him. ³ Do the same for his donkey, his garment, or anything your brother has lost and you have found. You must not ignore it. ⁴ If you see your brother’s donkey or ox fallen down on the road, do not ignore it; help him lift it up.

⁵ “A woman is not to wear male clothing, and a man is not to put on a woman’s garment, for everyone who does these things is detestable to the Lord your God.

⁶ “If you come across a bird’s nest with chicks or eggs, either in a tree or on the ground along the road, and the mother is sitting on the chicks or eggs, do not take the mother along with the young. ⁷ You may take the young for yourself, but be sure to let the mother go free, so that you may prosper and live long. ⁸ If you build a new house, make a railing around your roof, so that you don’t bring bloodguilt on your house if someone falls from it. ⁹ Do not plant your vineyard with two types of seed; otherwise, the entire harvest, both the crop you plant and the produce of the vineyard, will be defiled. ¹⁰ Do not plow with an ox and a donkey together. ¹¹ Do not wear clothes made of both wool and linen. ¹² Make tassels on the four corners of the outer garment you wear.

¹³ “If a man marries a woman, has sexual relations with her, and comes to hate her, ¹⁴ and accuses her of shameful conduct, and gives her a bad name, saying, ‘I married this woman and was intimate with her, but I didn’t find any evidence of her virginity,’ ¹⁵ the young woman’s father and mother will take the evidence of her virginity and bring it to the city elders at the city gate. ¹⁶ The young woman’s father will say to the elders, ‘I gave my daughter to this man as a wife, but he hates her. ¹⁷ He has accused her of shameful conduct, saying, “I didn’t find

any evidence of your daughter’s virginity,” but here is the evidence of my daughter’s virginity.’ They will spread out the cloth before the city elders. ¹⁸ Then the elders of that city will take the man and punish him. ¹⁹ They will also fine him a hundred silver shekels and give them to the young woman’s father, because that man gave an Israelite virgin a bad name. She will remain his wife; he cannot divorce her as long as he lives. ²⁰ But if this accusation is true and no evidence of the young woman’s virginity is found, ²¹ they will bring the woman to the door of her father’s house, and the men of her city will stone her to death. For she has committed an outrage in Israel by being promiscuous while living in her father’s house. You must purge the evil from you.

²² “If a man is discovered having sexual relations with another man’s wife, both the man who had sex with the woman and the woman must die. You must purge the evil from Israel. ²³ If there is a young woman who is a virgin engaged to a man, and another man encounters her in the city and sleeps with her, ²⁴ take the two of them out to the gate of that city and stone them to death—the young woman because she did not cry out in the city and the man because he has violated his neighbor’s fiancée. You must purge the evil from you. ²⁵ But if the man encounters an engaged woman in the open country, and he seizes and rapes her, only the man who raped her must die. ²⁶ Do nothing to the young woman, because she is not guilty of an offense deserving death. This case is just like one in which a man attacks his neighbor and murders him. ²⁷ When he found her in the field, the engaged woman cried out, but there was no one to rescue her. ²⁸ If a man encounters a young woman, a virgin who is not engaged, takes hold of her and rapes her, and they are discovered, ²⁹ the man who raped her is to give the young woman’s father fifty silver shekels, and she will become his wife because he violated her. He cannot divorce her as long as he lives.

³⁰ “A man is not to marry his father’s wife; he must not violate his father’s marriage bed.

Deuteronomy 21:1-23

What do we learn about God's character and values from His standards for:

unsolved murders:

treatment of captured women:

families with two wives:

rebellious sons:

punishing criminals:

How does Deuteronomy 21:22-23 relate to Jesus? (See Galatians 3:13.)

What does it mean that Jesus became a curse for you?

Deuteronomy 22:1-30

What do verses 1-4 teach us about living in community with each other?

How do the commands in verses 5-12 require making distinctions and living with intentionality? Why do you think Israel needed to be trained in intentional living?

How do your actions and choices change when you intentionally strive to follow God's commands? What tends to distract you from or get in the way of you prioritizing God's standards for living?

How do God's commands in verses 13-30 protect women in a male-dominated culture?

How do God's commands in these verses protect the people of Israel from evil and sin?

Why do you think marital faithfulness and sexual offenses are so important to God?

God's standards provide protection from dehumanizing actions. How might we be guilty of dehumanizing others today? How can we work toward providing protection for others?

As you go:

Reflect on ways others have mistreated you. Ask God to remove any bitterness, anger, or shame related to your mistreatment, and to replace those with His peace and joy. Reflect on ways you have mistreated others. Spend time in prayer confessing your mistreatment of others and asking Him to realign your priorities with His.

Reflections:

Because the Lord would dwell with Israel in the Promised Land, Moses gave Israel commands to ensure the land was not defiled by innocent blood. They were to offer a young unworked cow as a sacrifice to atone for the victim of an unsolved murder. Breaking the cow's neck indicated that the crime was worthy of the death penalty, and washing their hands over the cow's neck signified the innocence of the people. This sacrifice, performed in the valley and not at the altar, satisfied the Lord's wrath against the shedding of innocent blood in His Promised Land. Moses speaks again in Deuteronomy 21:22-23 about defiling the land when he addresses hanging a body on a tree. In that time people were executed primarily by stoning, but their dead body might be hung on a tree to demonstrate God's curse against them. This command points forward to Jesus who was crucified on a "tree," signifying God's curse on Him due to our sin which He took on Himself.

Moses then gave a series of commands to protect people from dehumanizing actions. When Israel fought cities outside the Promised Land and were allowed to take captives, soldiers were also allowed to marry foreign women. However, they had to first go through an entire month of preparation to allow the woman time to prepare for leaving behind her family and culture to join the people of God. This month-long wait also ensured a man was not taking advantage of a woman due to lust or greed. Firstborn sons were protected by God to receive their rightful inheritance even when there were multiple wives and perhaps other more favored sons in the family. Parents were protected by God from sons whose behavior posed a threat to the family's well-being due to their self-centered choices and rebellion against his parents which dishonors God. Moses also commanded Israel to maintain good relationships with each other by looking out for each other even when this help required extra effort.

Deuteronomy 22:5-12 gives a list of commands which would require Israel to live intentionally and thoughtfully. These commands establish distinctions that may seem arbitrary ("do not plow with an ox and a donkey together," for example), but require Israel to acknowledge that she is set apart from other nations to be God's holy people. God's commands offer ways to intentionally remember this distinction.

Chapter 22 ends with God's commands regarding sexual conduct, beginning with slander. The issue at hand is the integrity of the family line which was significant for passing on the family name and property. God offered these commands as a way for husbands to ensure no illegitimate children could enter his family line. Moses also addresses adultery, rape, and incest as sexual sins which must be avoided. As Creator, God has the authority to set boundary lines and standards of behavior for His creation. Sex is a good gift meant to be enjoyed according to His guidelines.



WEEK 15:

Deuteronomy 23-24

23 “No man whose testicles have been crushed or whose penis has been cut off may enter the Lord’s assembly. ² No one of illegitimate birth may enter the Lord’s assembly; none of his descendants, even to the tenth generation, may enter the Lord’s assembly. ³ No Ammonite or Moabite may enter the Lord’s assembly; none of their descendants, even to the tenth generation, may ever enter the Lord’s assembly. ⁴ This is because they did not meet you with food and water on the journey after you came out of Egypt, and because Balaam son of Beor from Pethor in Aram-naharaim was hired to curse you. ⁵ Yet the Lord your God would not listen to Balaam, but he turned the curse into a blessing for you because the Lord your God loves you. ⁶ Never pursue their welfare or prosperity as long as you live. ⁷ Do not despise an Edomite, because he is your brother. Do not despise an Egyptian, because you were a resident alien in his land. ⁸ The children born to them in the third generation may enter the Lord’s assembly.

⁹ “When you are encamped against your enemies, be careful to avoid anything offensive. ¹⁰ If there is a man among you who is unclean because of a bodily emission during the night, he must go outside the camp; he may not come anywhere inside the camp. ¹¹ When evening approaches, he is to wash with water, and when the sun sets he may come inside the camp. ¹² You are to have a place outside the camp and go there to relieve yourself. ¹³ You are to have a digging tool in your equipment; when you relieve yourself, dig a hole with it and cover up your excrement. ¹⁴ For the Lord your God walks throughout your camp to protect you and deliver your enemies to you;

so your encampments must be holy. He must not see anything indecent among you or he will turn away from you.

¹⁵ “Do not return a slave to his master when he has escaped from his master to you. ¹⁶ Let him live among you wherever he wants within your city gates. Do not mistreat him.

¹⁷ “No Israelite woman is to be a cult prostitute, and no Israelite man is to be a cult prostitute. ¹⁸ Do not bring a female prostitute’s wages or a male prostitute’s earnings into the house of the Lord your God to fulfill any vow, because both are detestable to the Lord your God.

¹⁹ “Do not charge your brother interest on silver, food, or anything that can earn interest. ²⁰ You may charge a foreigner interest, but you must not charge your brother Israelite interest, so that the Lord your God may bless you in everything you do in the land you are entering to possess.

²¹ “If you make a vow to the Lord your God, do not be slow to keep it, because he will require it of you, and it will be counted against you as sin. ²² But if you refrain from making a vow, it will not be counted against you as sin. ²³ Be careful to do whatever comes from your lips, because you have freely vowed what you promised to the Lord your God.

²⁴ “When you enter your neighbor’s vineyard, you may eat as many grapes as you want until you are full, but do not put any in your container. ²⁵ When you enter your neighbor’s standing grain, you may pluck heads of grain with your hand, but do not put a sickle to your neighbor’s grain.

24

“If a man marries a woman, but she becomes displeasing to him because he finds something indecent about her, he may write her a divorce certificate, hand it to her, and send her away from his house. ² If after leaving his house she goes and becomes another man’s wife, ³ and the second man hates her, writes her a divorce certificate, hands it to her, and sends her away from his house or if he dies, ⁴ the first husband who sent her away may not marry her again after she has been defiled, because that would be detestable to the Lord. You must not bring guilt on the land the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance.

⁵ “When a man takes a bride, he must not go out with the army or be liable for any duty. He is free to stay at home for one year, so that he can bring joy to the wife he has married.

⁶ “Do not take a pair of grindstones or even the upper millstone as security for a debt, because that is like taking a life as security.

⁷ “If a man is discovered kidnapping one of his Israelite brothers, whether he treats him as a slave or sells him, the kidnapper must die. You must purge the evil from you.

⁸ “Be careful with a person who has a case of serious skin disease, following carefully everything the Levitical priests instruct you to do. Be careful to do as I have commanded them. ⁹ Remember what the Lord your God did to Miriam on the journey after you left Egypt.

¹⁰ “When you make a loan of any kind to your neighbor, do not enter his house to collect what he offers as security. ¹¹ Stand outside while the man you are making the loan to brings the security out to you. ¹² If he is a poor man, do not sleep with the garment he has given as security. ¹³ Be sure to return it to him at sunset. Then he will sleep in it and bless you, and this will be counted as righteousness to you before the Lord your God.

¹⁴ “Do not oppress a hired worker who is poor and needy, whether one of your Israelite brothers or one of the resident aliens in a town

in your land. ¹⁵ You are to pay him his wages each day before the sun sets, because he is poor and depends on them. Otherwise he will cry out to the Lord against you, and you will be held guilty.

¹⁶ “Fathers are not to be put to death for their children, and children are not to be put to death for their fathers; each person will be put to death for his own sin. ¹⁷ Do not deny justice to a resident alien or fatherless child, and do not take a widow’s garment as security. ¹⁸ Remember that you were a slave in Egypt, and the Lord your God redeemed you from there. Therefore I am commanding you to do this.

¹⁹ “When you reap the harvest in your field, and you forget a sheaf in the field, do not go back to get it. It is to be left for the resident alien, the fatherless, and the widow, so that the Lord your God may bless you in all the work of your hands. ²⁰ When you knock down the fruit from your olive tree, do not go over the branches again. What remains will be for the resident alien, the fatherless, and the widow. ²¹ When you gather the grapes of your vineyard, do not glean what is left. What remains will be for the resident alien, the fatherless, and the widow. ²² Remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt. Therefore I am commanding you to do this.

Things to ponder:

Summarize the passage in your own words:

What questions do you have?

Deuteronomy 23:1-8

Who was not allowed to become part of the “assembly of God”?

What was God’s reasoning behind this?

Who were the Israelites told not to despise? Why?

Deuteronomy 23:9-25

Leviticus 15 covers ceremonial laws in depth relating to bodily discharge. Verses 9-14 indicate that God’s rules apply even when the men are off to war against their enemies - how might this apply to us? (Consider Deuteronomy 6:4-9.)

What do verses 15-16 show about the nature of God?

What do these verses (17-18) teach us about offerings/giving to God? Why would he reject some offerings? What does this teach us about Him?

How do verses 21-23 reveal the seriousness in which God takes promises we make to him? Are there commitments you have made and have not persevered in?

Deuteronomy 24:1-5

Read Matthew 5:31-32 and Mark 10:4-12. How does Jesus expand or clarify God's posture on divorce?

What benefit is there for a married couple to spend their first year without separation? Consider the context of how marriages were formulated in the ancient Near East and how this passage falls after the law on divorce.

Deuteronomy 24:6-22

How do the laws in this section protect the poor?

- Not taking a person's millstones (v6)

- Returning a cloak before sunset (v13)

- Paying wages before sunset (v15)

- Not taking a cloak as a pledge (v17)

- Leaving the remains of your field (v19-22)

Define "justice" according to Scripture. Does this match your initial idea of what 'justice' means? What does it mean not to deprive someone of justice?

What do these laws display about God's heart for the foreigner, fatherless, and poor?

How can we walk righteously as we practically care for these same people groups?

As you go:

This week, think about how you and your community could intentionally serve the marginalized people groups in your area. Write down specific examples of how these verses may apply to our modern day society. Pray for obedient hands and feet as God uses His Word to transform our lives for the sake of our community.

Reflections:

The previous chapter spoke to the Israelites about purity codes within marriage while 21:1-8 gives details of idealized leadership and worship. Based on context, the term “assembly of the LORD” in 23:2 probably refers to leadership rather than a broad term encompassing all of Israel. Eunuchs, illegitimate children, Ammonites, and Moabites were forbidden forever. Remember, the Ammonites and Moabites were related to Abraham through his nephew Lot, and they had opposed the Israelites on their way to the Promised Land (Numbers 22-24). Third-generation Edomites (descendants of Esau) and Egyptians were able to enter “the assembly of the LORD.” God seemingly held harsher parameters on the Ammonites and Moabites who were blood related and outrightly opposed to Israel. Here though, he lends kindness and leniency to the Egyptians and Edomites due to their devotion and hospitality. They are granted full citizenship and rights to the nation of Israel as God teaches them a practical lesson on generosity and righteous living.

The rest of the section speaks to miscellaneous laws that cover a range of subjects. Israel is to maintain ritual cleanliness within the army camp due to God’s perceived localized presence. As God continues to form Israel, He uses these law codes to shape them into people of righteous living. If they are to bear His name and represent Him to a watching world, they will need to behave in a way that shows dignity to people and praise to God.

Israel is to be a place of refuge for foreign slaves. Men and women were not to emulate the pagan practices of prostitution, nor were they to use the money in an offering to God. They were not to profit off their own people’s misfortune (Exod 22:25; Lev 25:36-37; Deut 15:1-6), but could enact interest to foreigners. God also reminded them that their words have power and they will be held to everything they speak. Jesus recalls this law in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:33-37), expanding on the singular nature of breaking oaths to God while encompassing the power our tongues wield in conversation with people.

Chapter 22 begins the portion of laws in regards to marriage. What sounds like a stamp of approval for divorce in chapter 24 is really God working within the practices that had already pervaded Israel. Many times God moves within a culture already established but does not explicitly denounce the practice, He only adds guardrails. If we look closely, the law speaks into divorce followed by remarrying, not the permission of divorce in the first place. As the verses continue, God places high status on a couple spending time together and getting to know one another in their first year of marriage.

Deuteronomy 23:24 begins the section on how to treat marginalized people groups. The Israelites were nomads at this point but would be coming into a highly coveted land called the Fertile Crescent that was known for its abundant access to water. God wanted the Israelites to remember that they were once slaves in Egypt before He had delivered them, in order to keep their hearts humble and hands open since the most vulnerable in their society would come to rely on this generosity. Our obedience to God has a communal effect. Just as Jesus noticed and cared for the people on the fringes of society, we too must live righteously as we emulate His compassion.



WEEK 16:

Deuteronomy 25-26

25 “If there is a dispute between men, they are to go to court, and the judges will hear their case. They will clear the innocent and condemn the guilty. ² If the guilty party deserves to be flogged, the judge will make him lie down and be flogged in his presence with the number of lashes appropriate for his crime. ³ He may be flogged with forty lashes, but no more. Otherwise, if he is flogged with more lashes than these, your brother will be degraded in your sight.

⁴ “Do not muzzle an ox while it treads out grain.

⁵ “When brothers live on the same property and one of them dies without a son, the wife of the dead man may not marry a stranger outside the family. Her brother-in-law is to take her as his wife, have sexual relations with her, and perform the duty of a brother-in-law for her. ⁶ The first son she bears will carry on the name of the dead brother, so his name will not be blotted out from Israel. ⁷ But if the man doesn’t want to marry his sister-in-law, she is to go to the elders at the city gate and say, ‘My brother-in-law refuses to preserve his brother’s name in Israel. He isn’t willing to perform the duty of a brother-in-law for me.’ ⁸ The elders of his city will summon him and speak with him. If he persists and says, ‘I don’t want to marry her,’ ⁹ then his sister-in-law will go up to him in the sight of the elders, remove his sandal from his foot, and spit in his face. Then she will declare, ‘This is what is done to a man who will not build up his brother’s house.’ ¹⁰ And his family name in Israel will be ‘The house of the man whose sandal was removed.’

¹¹ “If two men are fighting with each other, and the wife of one steps in to rescue her husband from the one striking him, and she

puts out her hand and grabs his genitals, ¹² you are to cut off her hand. Do not show pity.

¹³ “Do not have differing weights in your bag, one heavy and one light. ¹⁴ Do not have differing dry measures in your house, a larger and a smaller. ¹⁵ You must have a full and honest weight, a full and honest dry measure, so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you. ¹⁶ For everyone who does such things and acts unfairly is detestable to the Lord your God.

¹⁷ “Remember what the Amalekites did to you on the journey after you left Egypt. ¹⁸ They met you along the way and attacked all your stragglers from behind when you were tired and weary. They did not fear God. ¹⁹ When the Lord your God gives you rest from all the enemies around you in the land the Lord your God is giving you to possess as an inheritance, blot out the memory of Amalek under heaven. Do not forget.

26 “When you enter the land the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance, and you take possession of it and live in it, ² take some of the first of all the land’s produce that you harvest from the land the Lord your God is giving you and put it in a basket. Then go to the place where the Lord your God chooses to have his name dwell. ³ When you come before the priest who is serving at that time, say to him, ‘Today I declare to the Lord your God that I have entered the land the Lord swore to our ancestors to give us.’

⁴ “Then the priest will take the basket from you and place it before the altar of the Lord your God. ⁵ You are to respond by saying in the presence of the Lord your God:

My father was a wandering Aramean. He went down to Egypt with a few people and resided there as an alien. There he became a great, powerful, and populous nation.⁶ But the Egyptians mistreated and oppressed us, and forced us to do hard labor.⁷ So we called out to the Lord, the God of our ancestors, and the Lord heard our cry and saw our misery, hardship, and oppression.⁸ Then the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a strong hand and an outstretched arm, with terrifying power, and with signs and wonders.⁹ He led us to this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey.¹⁰ I have now brought the first of the land's produce that you, Lord, have given me.

You will then place the container before the Lord your God and bow down to him.¹¹ You, the Levites, and the resident aliens among you will rejoice in all the good things the Lord your God has given you and your household.

¹² “When you have finished paying all the tenth of your produce in the third year, the year of the tenth, you are to give it to the Levites, resident aliens, fatherless children, and widows, so that they may eat in your towns and be satisfied.¹³ Then you will say in the presence of the Lord your God:

I have taken the consecrated portion out of my house; I have also given it to the Levites, resident aliens, fatherless children, and widows, according to all the commands you gave me. I have not violated or forgotten your commands.¹⁴ I have not eaten any of it while in mourning, or removed any of it while unclean, or offered any of it for the dead. I have obeyed the Lord my God; I have done all you commanded me.¹⁵ Look down from your holy dwelling, from heaven, and bless your people Israel and the land you have given us as you swore to our ancestors, a land flowing with milk and honey.

¹⁶ “The Lord your God is commanding you this day to follow these statutes and ordinances. Follow them carefully with all your heart and all your soul.¹⁷ Today you have affirmed that the Lord is your God and that you will walk in his ways, keep his statutes, commands, and ordinances, and obey him.¹⁸ And today the Lord has affirmed that you are his own possession as he promised you, that you are to keep all his commands,¹⁹ that he will elevate you to praise, fame, and glory above all the nations he has made, and that you will be a holy people to the Lord your God as he promised.”

Things to ponder:

Summarize the passage in your own words:

What questions do you have?

Deuteronomy 25:1-19

Deuteronomy offers wisdom for how the one responsible for the discipline must handle common disputes. Who are people you are in charge of, and how can you pull wisdom from these passages in how we are to behave within these power dynamics?

Read 1 Timothy 5:17-18. In what way does this passage expand your view of God's character and desire to care for those who labor on His behalf?

Levirate¹ marriage was in practice before the Mosaic Law. Read Genesis 38 and write out how/if the law was obeyed and how the lineage progressed (Hint: See Matthew 1:1-6).

The Lord has given immeasurably more than we deserve and expects us to handle our business with honesty and integrity. How might v13-16 be applied today?

1. A protective custom for a childless widowed woman to marry her deceased husband's brother in order to produce descendants.

What might be the outcome of a society where believers handled every interaction with justice, honesty, and mutual benefit?

Deuteronomy 26:1-15

Why does God ask the Israelites to specifically tithe to the Levites, foreigner, and widow?

If you did an inventory of your time and finances, in what ways would it show your priorities for those in need?

How do you spend time remembering what God has done for you? How does this change the way you care for your community?

Do you find it difficult to give God your “firsts”?

Deuteronomy 26:16-19

Read the Great Commission in Matthew 28: 16-20. How does this verse relate to these passages in Deuteronomy?

What does it mean individually to “walk in obedience to Him...keep his decrees, commands, and laws- that you will listen to him”?

With a communal aspect of faith in mind, what is the benefit for the society when people walk in obedience to God and keep his commands?

Reflections:

These verses set limits on punishment, safeguarding human dignity even in cases of wrongdoing. Flogging was the most common form of judicial punishment in this cultural context. However, the Mosaic Law adds two important stipulations: it must be done in the presence of a judge, and it could not exceed the amount of 40 lashes. Surrounding societies would often use this form of punishment until the guilty lay maimed or dead. In the period between the Old and New Testament, Jews held so tightly to the Law that they changed the number to 39 to avoid mistakenly exceeding the imposed limit. Jesus himself bore these lashes on his earthly body on the way to Calvary, as he would become the ultimate and perfect sacrifice on our behalf.

While 25:4 may seem random, it encapsulates humane treatment of those who labor on your behalf. Paul uses this verse in 1 Timothy 5:17-18 to illustrate how the church is to care for its overseers. The regulation concerning Levirate marriage ensures the continuation of a deceased man's name and prevents the loss of his inheritance. This emphasizes family solidarity and the importance of lineage within Israelite society. The laws in Deuteronomy 25:13-16 call for honest business practices reflecting God's character and His concern for righteousness in everyday life. Chapter 25 finishes with the reminder to blot out the name of the Amalekites because of their outright opposition to God and His people.

Chapter 26 extensively speaks about the first-fruits offering. Once the Israelites were established in the Promised Land they were to gather the first of the harvest and bring it to God's sanctuary. This was an act of trust in and recognition of God's provision and was repeated yearly during the Festival of Weeks as mentioned in Deuteronomy 16:9-15. Every third year, they were to use their tithe to care for those in their community who did not own land and could not produce a harvest (Deuteronomy 14:28-19). This was to remind themselves of their previous captivity and how love for God is expressed in the way we treat others.

Chapter 25 looked forward to Israel's emplacement within Canaan. Here in v16-19, Moses redirects their attention to the present. Chapters 5-26 encapsulates Moses' recitation of the Law, and now they sit within a covenant renewal ceremony. Israel declares unwavering obedience to Yahweh while He promises blessing and acknowledgement of their identity as His chosen people. God's sovereignty and power is recognized, and Israel promises to adhere to righteous works in the bounds of a loving covenant with their Creator.



Bible Study Resources

Riverview Resources

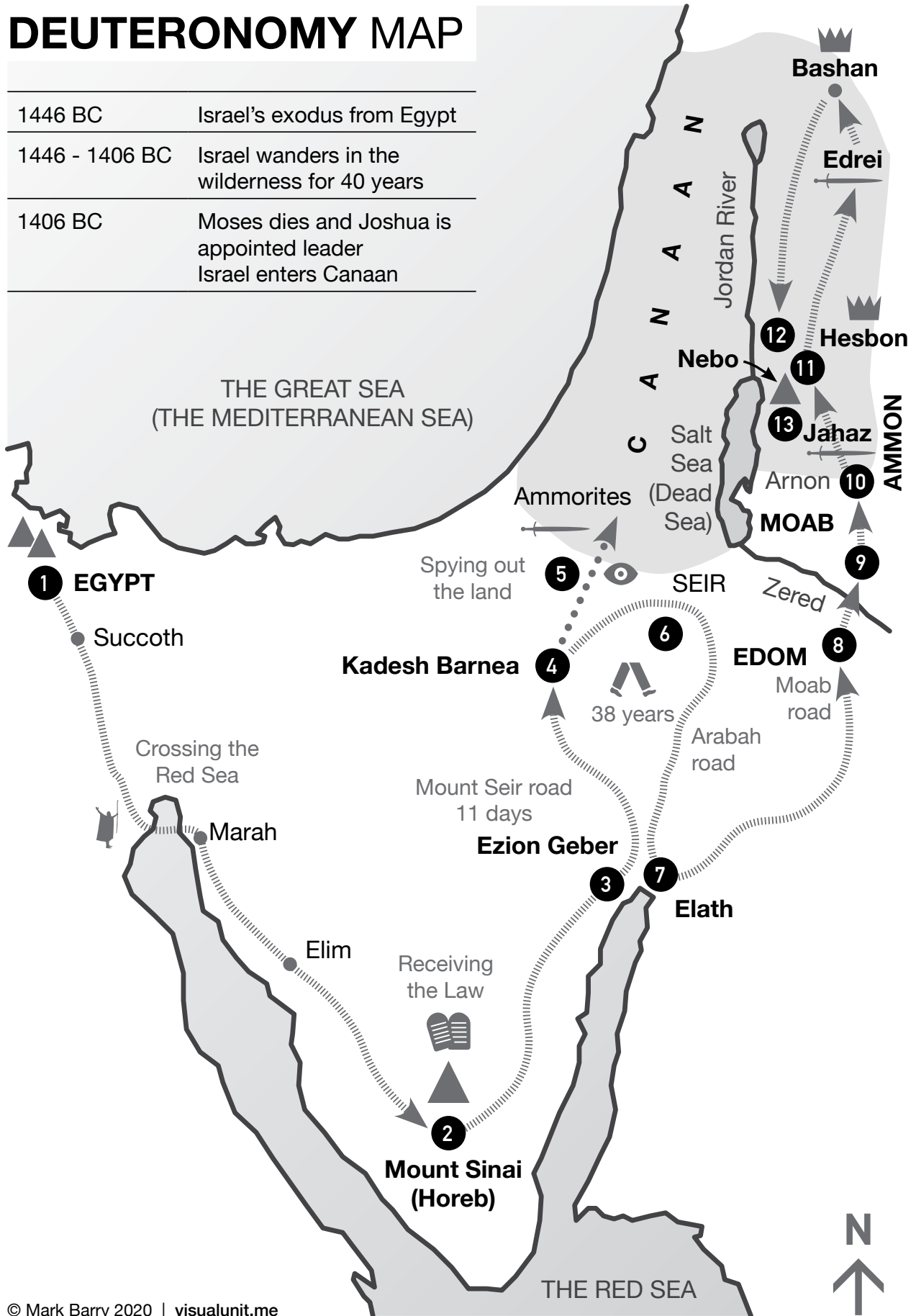
- **Introduction to Inductive Bible Study** - rivchurch.com/inductivebiblestudy
a short video outlining how we approach studying the Bible. (15 minutes)
- **Reading the Bible Normally** - rivchurch.com/readingthebiblenormally
a one-page document outlining how we approach studying the Bible.
- **Comprehension Questions** - rivchurch.com/biblecomprehensionquestions
strategies to help you consider what the Bible says.
- **Five Ws Study Guide** - rivchurch.com/fivewstudyguide
a list of questions to get you started.
- **Riverview's Messages** - rivchurch.com/watch/messages
A catalog of current and past messages from Riverview Church.
Sort by series, speaker, or location.
- **Online Classes** - rivchurch.com/watch/online-classes
Three on-demand classes to get you plugged into Riverview (Membership Class), familiar with the Bible (Bible Basics), and studying the Bible (Interpreting the Bible Normally).

Other Resources

- **CSB Study Bible**
- **Bible Gateway** - biblegateway.com
A searchable online Bible with over 200 translations and audio versions.
- **Interlinear Bible** - biblehub.com/interlinear
Greek and Hebrew with Concordance
- **BibleRef** - bibleref.com
Free online Bible commentary
- **The Bible Project YouTube channel** - youtube.com/user/jointhebibleproject
Short, animated videos that help you better understand the Bible.
- **Got Questions? website** - gotquestions.org
A searchable resource of over 7,600 answers to frequently asked Bible questions.
- *Women of the Word: How to Study the Bible with Both Our Hearts and Our Minds*
by Jen Wilkin
- *Grasping God's Word: A Hands-On Approach to Reading, Interpreting, and Applying the Bible*
by Scott Duvall & Daniel Hayes
- *The Old Testament Law for the Life of the Church: Reading the Torah in the Light of Christ*
by Richard E. Averbeck

DEUTERONOMY MAP

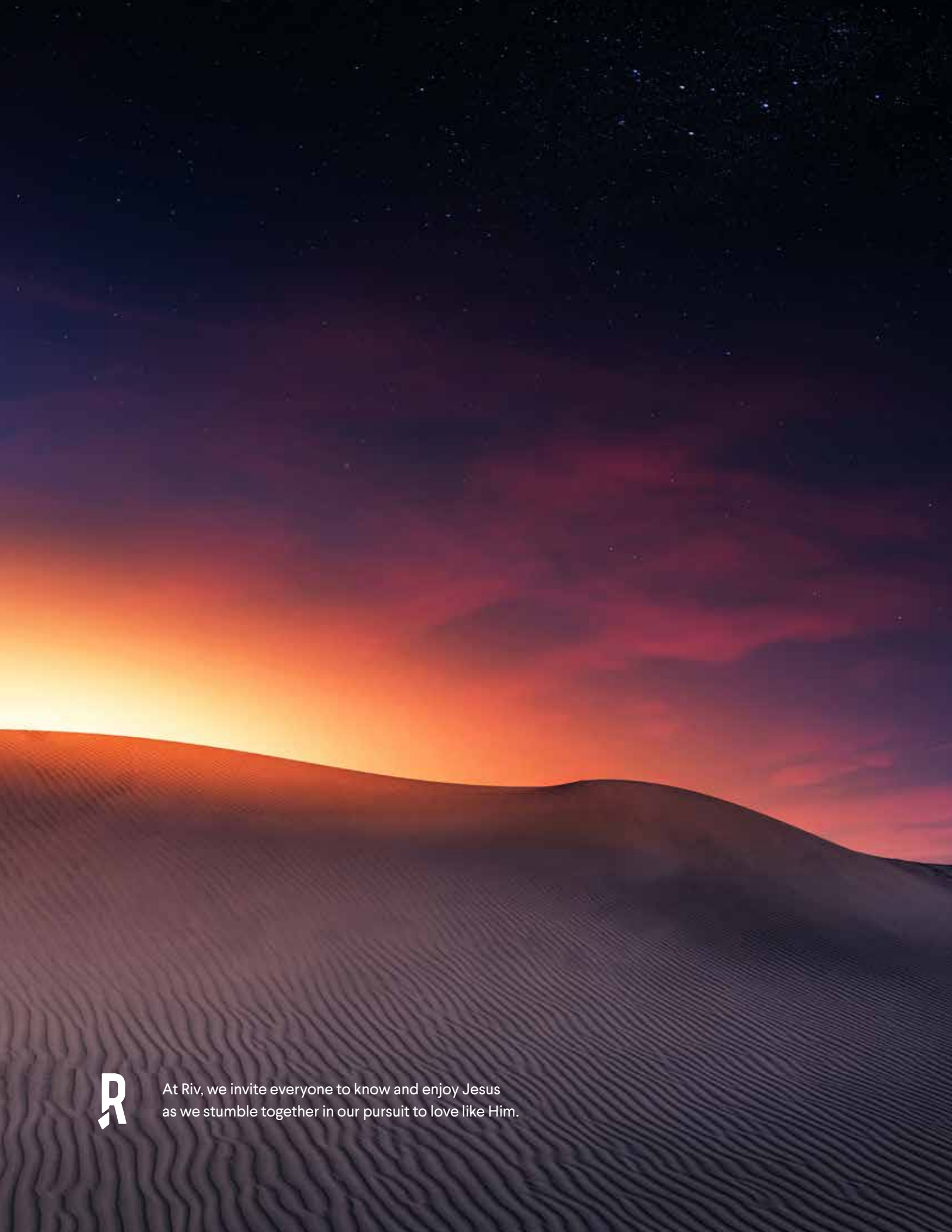
1446 BC	Israel's exodus from Egypt
1446 - 1406 BC	Israel wanders in the wilderness for 40 years
1406 BC	Moses dies and Joshua is appointed leader Israel enters Canaan



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DEUTERONOMY MAP | KEY

- 1. Egypt:** God saves Israel out of slavery in Egypt and leads them to Mount Sinai (Horeb).
- 2. Mount Sinai (Horeb):** God gives Israel the law through Moses and commands Israel to head to Canaan and take the land he promised to their forefathers (1:6-8).
- 3. Mount Seir road:** Israel make the 11-day trek from Horeb to Kadesh Barnea (1:2,19). Moses commands Israel to take the land (1:20-21).
- 4. Kadesh Barnea:** Israel sends spies to scope out the land and they return with news of its goodness *and* its giant inhabitants. Israel rebels against God and refuses to enter the land (1:22-33). God swears that no living adult (except Joshua) will enter the land (1:34-40).
5. Israel defiantly marches into the hill country of the Amorites and is soundly beaten back, camping in Kadesh for many days (1:41-45).
- 6. Seir | Arabah road:** Israel wanders around the hill country of Seir back towards the Red Sea and along the Arabah road for many years (2:1; 2:14).
- 7. Elath | Moab road:** God instructs Israel to head back north peacefully past the descendants of Esau (Edom) from Elath and Ezion Geber along the Moab road (2:2-8).
- 8. Zered:** God instructs Israel to travel peacefully past the Moabites and across the Zered Valley. 38 years have now passed since leaving Kadesh Barnea and the whole generation of fighting men has died (2:9,13-14).
- 9. Moab:** God commands Israel to leave Moab and travel peacefully past the Ammonites (2:16-19).
- 10. Arnon Gorge | Jahaz:** Israel sets out across the Arnon Gorge and seek to make peace with Sihon the Amorite (King of Heshbon). However, he meets them for battle at Jahaz, where his army is completely defeated and all his cities taken (2:24-37).
- 11. Hesbon | Edrei:** As Israel heads from Hesbon towards Bashan, Og the Amorite (King of Bashan) meets them for battle at Edrei, where his army is also defeated and all his cities taken as well (3:1-10).
- 12. Beth Peor:** After all the land East of the Jordan is divided between the tribes of Reuben, Gad and Manasseh (3:12-13), Israel camps in the valley near Beth Peor (3:29). Here Moses reminds Israel of her past, before renewing the covenant with God, as they prepare to enter the land without him.
- 13. Mount Nebo:** After Moses looks to Israel's future and blesses the tribes, he climbs Mount Nebo to see the promised land with his own eyes, before he dies (34:1-5).



At Riv, we invite everyone to know and enjoy Jesus
as we stumble together in our pursuit to love like Him.

Deuteronomy

S T U D Y G U I D E

SPRING SESSION 2024



Written by Alex McGraw and Julie Partridge

Deuteronomy

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Deuteronomy Study Guide - Spring Session 2024

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Schedule

Week	Date	Topic	Location	Session Complete
1	Sept. 20	Introduction	Westside	
2	Sept. 27	Deuteronomy 1	Westside	
3	Oct. 4	Deuteronomy 2-3	Westside	
4	Oct. 11	Deuteronomy 4:1-43	Westside	
5	Oct. 18	Deuteronomy 4:44-6:9	Westside	
6	Oct. 25	Deuteronomy 6:10-7:26	Westside	
7	Nov. 1	Deuteronomy 8:1-9:6	Westside	
8	Nov. 8	Deuteronomy 9:7-10:22	Westside	
Winter Break				
9	Jan. 17	Deuteronomy 11	Holt	
10	Jan. 24	Deuteronomy 12-14	Holt	
11	Jan. 31	Deuteronomy 15:1-16:17	Holt	
12	Feb. 7	Deuteronomy 16:18-18:22	Holt	
13	Feb. 14	Deuteronomy 19-20	Holt	
14	Feb. 21	Deuteronomy 21-22	Holt	
15	Feb. 28	Deuteronomy 23-24	Holt	
16	Mar. 6	Deuteronomy 25-26	Holt	
Spring Break				
17	Apr. 10	Deuteronomy 27	REO Town	
18	Apr. 17	Deuteronomy 28	REO Town	
19	Apr. 24	Deuteronomy 29-30	REO Town	
20	May 1	Deuteronomy 31	REO Town	
21	May 8	Deuteronomy 32	REO Town	
22	May 15	Deuteronomy 33-34	REO Town	



Recap of Deuteronomy 1-26

Deuteronomy is the final book of law in the Pentateuch, also known as the Torah, which comprises the first five books of the Old Testament. Deuteronomy consists of a series of speeches made to Israel by Moses who has been their leader since God delivered Israel out of slavery in Egypt and through the forty years they wandered in the wilderness. At the beginning of Deuteronomy, Israel is positioned at the edge of the Promised Land ready to enter. Moses takes this opportunity to address Israel to prepare them for living as God's holy and chosen people in this land He promised to Abraham.

In the first section of his speeches, Moses reminds Israel of their rebellion against God in spite of His faithfulness to them. Moses gives specific examples of Israel's rebellion such as their refusal to enter the Promised Land forty years earlier due to their fear of the large and powerful nations already living in the land. Moses also reminds them of their grumbling against the Lord and their idolatry. But He calls this generation of Israel to live differently than their parents demonstrated. With the repeated themes of "love" and "obey," Moses calls Israel to set their sights on remembering the covenant God made with Abraham and the covenant He made with them, recounting the ways God has provided and protected them, and living faithfully in relationship with their God. Moses reminds Israel of God's commands, beginning with a reiteration of the ten words (also known as the ten commandments) and the Shema which says, "Listen, Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength" (Deuteronomy 6:4-5). This is a significant instruction for Israel because they are about to enter a land where the people worship many gods, but Israel must remember the privilege they have to know the One True God. By worshiping, loving, and obeying God who has promised to deliver the Promised Land to them, Israel will reveal the wisdom and justice of their God to the nations.

In the second section of speeches, Moses lays out a series of laws, some of which were recorded earlier in the Torah and some of which are new. These laws encompass a wide range of topics including worship, caring for the poor, character qualities for Israel's leaders, civil life including family and marriage, and how the legal system should protect widows and orphans. These laws are written specifically to ancient Israel and cannot be compared or directly applied to our culture today. Some of these laws may appear harsh to us today, so it is helpful to remember that the purpose of these laws was to set Israel apart to a higher level of justice and care for others as compared to their enemy nations. Deuteronomy 26:16-19 gives a concise description of God's intentions for Israel as they enter the Promised Land. They are called to live in covenant relationship with Him as God's chosen and holy people as they trust Him to go before them and to deliver into their possession the land God has promised them.

We begin this session of study with the third section of Moses' speeches, starting in Deuteronomy 27.



WEEK 17:

Deuteronomy 27

27 Moses and the elders of Israel commanded the people, “Keep every command I am giving you today. ² When you cross the Jordan into the land the Lord your God is giving you, set up large stones and cover them with plaster. ³ Write all the words of this law on the stones after you cross to enter the land the Lord your God is giving you, a land flowing with milk and honey, as the Lord, the God of your ancestors, has promised you. ⁴ When you have crossed the Jordan, you are to set up these stones on Mount Ebal, as I am commanding you today, and you are to cover them with plaster. ⁵ Build an altar of stones there to the Lord your God—do not use any iron tool on them. ⁶ Use uncut stones to build the altar of the Lord your God and offer burnt offerings to the Lord your God on it. ⁷ There you are to sacrifice fellowship offerings, eat, and rejoice in the presence of the Lord your God. ⁸ Write clearly all the words of this law on the plastered stones.”

⁹ Moses and the Levitical priests spoke to all Israel, “Be silent, Israel, and listen! This day you have become the people of the Lord your God. ¹⁰ Obey the Lord your God and follow his commands and statutes I am giving you today.”

¹¹ On that day Moses commanded the people, ¹² “When you have crossed the Jordan, these tribes will stand on Mount Gerizim to bless the people: Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Joseph, and Benjamin. ¹³ And these tribes will stand on Mount Ebal to deliver the curse: Reuben, Gad, Asher, Zebulun, Dan, and Naphtali. ¹⁴ The Levites will proclaim in a loud voice to every Israelite:

¹⁵ “The person who makes a carved idol or cast image, which is detestable to the Lord, the work of a craftsman, and sets it up in secret is cursed.’

And all the people will reply, ‘Amen!’

¹⁶ ‘The one who dishonors his father or mother is cursed.’

And all the people will say, ‘Amen!’

¹⁷ ‘The one who moves his neighbor’s boundary marker is cursed.’

And all the people will say, ‘Amen!’

¹⁸ ‘The one who leads a blind person astray on the road is cursed.’

And all the people will say, ‘Amen!’

¹⁹ ‘The one who denies justice to a resident alien, a fatherless child, or a widow is cursed.’

And all the people will say, ‘Amen!’

²⁰ ‘The one who sleeps with his father’s wife is cursed, for he has violated his father’s marriage bed.’

And all the people will say, ‘Amen!’

²¹ ‘The one who has sexual intercourse with any animal is cursed.’

And all the people will say, ‘Amen!’

²² ‘The one who sleeps with his sister, whether his father’s daughter or his mother’s daughter is cursed.’

And all the people will say, ‘Amen!’

²³ ‘The one who sleeps with his mother-in-law is cursed.’

And all the people will say, ‘Amen!’

²⁴ ‘The one who secretly kills his neighbor is cursed.’

And all the people will say, ‘Amen!’

²⁵ ‘The one who accepts a bribe to kill an innocent person is cursed.’

And all the people will say, ‘Amen!’

²⁶ ‘Anyone who does not put the words of this law into practice is cursed.’

And all the people will say, ‘Amen!’

Things to ponder:

Summarize the passage in your own words:

What questions do you have?

Deuteronomy 27:1-8

Verse 1 tells us that the elders joined Moses in commanding the people (priests also join in verse 9). How would this have been significant as Israel prepares to move into the Promised Land?

What instructions does Israel receive for when they enter the Promised Land?

Locate Mt. Ebal on a map. Notice its proximity to Shechem. Locat Mt. Ebal and Shechem and draw them on the map at the back of this book. What other event happened here? (See Genesis 12:1-7). Why is this significant?

Moses instructed Israel to construct both the stones with the written law and the altar on Mt. Ebal. What is the purpose of having the altar near this public display of the law? What does this teach us about God?

How do God's people today know God's law and enter into a relationship with Him?

Deuteronomy 27:9-26

What does it mean that Israel had become the people of the Lord their God?

What sets them apart from other nations?

Read Joshua 8:30-35. Envision this dramatic worship service in your mind.

Record your impressions and thoughts here.

Why is it necessary for God's people to be reminded about the consequences of not living in obedience to Him?

What kinds of behavior would result in God's curse?
How does this reveal the character of God and what He values?

What is the meaning of the word "Amen"? How does this response demonstrate the Israelites' commitment to their covenant with God?

What is the benefit of God's people proclaiming publicly and together their agreement to this covenant? How can we experience this as God's people today?

Reflections:

Deuteronomy 27 begins the final portion of Moses' speeches to Israel as he prepares them for entering the Promised Land. God has told Moses that he will not enter the Promised Land with the people of Israel, so his days as spiritual leader are nearing an end. In this chapter, we see the elders and priests join Moses in commanding the people, which reminds Israel that God has provided the leadership they need to enter the land and to live in obedience to God.

Mt. Ebal is near the city of Shechem where God first made His covenant with Abraham and promised this land to Abraham's ancestors, and Moses gives specific instructions regarding Mt. Ebal. Moses commands Israel to set up stones covered in plaster and carved with the law, reminding the people of their responsibility to obey. In addition to these stones, Israel was to set up an altar made of uncut fieldstones. The altar represented the means by which Israel could approach God through sacrifices and offerings. Burnt offerings involved sacrificing and burning an animal in its entirety to provide general atonement for sin. Fellowship offerings involved using part of the animal sacrifice as a consecrated meal which would be shared among multiple parties in the presence of God. Having the stones inscribed with the law and the altar together at Mt. Ebal provides a clear picture of the truth that no one is able to keep God's laws which means we need atonement for our sin to be reconciled in fellowship with God, all of which has been accomplished for God's people today through the perfect sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

In Deuteronomy 27:9-10, Moses and the priests said, "Be silent, Israel, and listen! You have now become the people of the Lord your God. Obey the Lord your God and follow His commands and decrees that I give you today." As God's chosen people, Israel has the law and the altar. The blessings and curses that Moses is about to proclaim will be determined by Israel's choices regarding obedience to God. Because of mankind's sin, the law is only able to bring God's curse. But the altar offers the blessing of atonement and fellowship with God because of His mercy and grace.

Moses instructs Israel to recommit themselves to their covenant with God when they arrive at Mt. Ebal and Mt. Gerazim. He describes a worship service in which the Levites will stand in the middle of all the people to proclaim twelve curses closely related to the ten commandments. The people were to proclaim, "Amen!", which means, "So shall it be!" In this way, Israel would agree to the terms of the covenant, accept responsibility to live in covenant relationship with God through obedience to Him, and remember that disobedience will result in God's curse. This worship service demonstrates the communal nature of life as God's people - they were part of this covenant together.



WEEK 18:

Deuteronomy 28

28 “Now if you faithfully obey the Lord your God and are careful to follow all his commands I am giving you today, the Lord your God will put you far above all the nations of the earth. ² All these blessings will come and overtake you, because you obey the Lord your God:

³ You will be blessed in the city and blessed in the country.

⁴ Your offspring will be blessed, and your land’s produce, and the offspring of your livestock, including the young of your herds and the newborn of your flocks.

⁵ Your basket and kneading bowl will be blessed.

⁶ You will be blessed when you come in and blessed when you go out.

⁷ “The Lord will cause the enemies who rise up against you to be defeated before you. They will march out against you from one direction but flee from you in seven directions. ⁸ The Lord will grant you a blessing on your barns and on everything you do; he will bless you in the land the Lord your God is giving you. ⁹ The Lord will establish you as his holy people, as he swore to you, if you obey the commands of the Lord your God and walk in his ways. ¹⁰ Then all the peoples of the earth will see that you bear the Lord’s name, and they will stand in awe of you. ¹¹ The Lord will make you prosper abundantly with offspring, the offspring of your livestock, and your land’s produce in the land the Lord swore to your ancestors to give you. ¹² The Lord will open for you his abundant

storehouse, the sky, to give your land rain in its season and to bless all the work of your hands. You will lend to many nations, but you will not borrow. ¹³ The Lord will make you the head and not the tail; you will only move upward and never downward if you listen to the Lord your God’s commands I am giving you today and are careful to follow them. ¹⁴ Do not turn aside to the right or the left from all the things I am commanding you today, and do not follow other gods to worship them.

¹⁵ “But if you do not obey the Lord your God by carefully following all his commands and statutes I am giving you today, all these curses will come and overtake you:

¹⁶ You will be cursed in the city and cursed in the country.

¹⁷ Your basket and kneading bowl will be cursed.

¹⁸ Your offspring will be cursed, and your land’s produce, the young of your herds, and the newborn of your flocks.

¹⁹ You will be cursed when you come in and cursed when you go out.

²⁰ The Lord will send against you curses, confusion, and rebuke in everything you do until you are destroyed and quickly perish, because of the wickedness of your actions in abandoning me. ²¹ The Lord will make pestilence cling to you until he has exterminated you from the land you are entering to possess. ²² The Lord will afflict you with wasting disease, fever, inflammation, burning heat, drought, blight, and mildew; these will pursue you until you perish.

²³ The sky above you will be bronze, and the earth beneath you iron. ²⁴ The Lord will turn the rain of your land into falling dust; it will descend on you from the sky until you are destroyed. ²⁵ The Lord will cause you to be defeated before your enemies. You will march out against them from one direction but flee from them in seven directions. You will be an object of horror to all the kingdoms of the earth. ²⁶ Your corpses will be food for all the birds of the sky and the wild animals of the earth, with no one to scare them away.

²⁷ “The Lord will afflict you with the boils of Egypt, tumors, a festering rash, and scabies, from which you cannot be cured. ²⁸ The Lord will afflict you with madness, blindness, and mental confusion, ²⁹ so that at noon you will grope as a blind person gropes in the dark. You will not be successful in anything you do. You will only be oppressed and robbed continually, and no one will help you. ³⁰ You will become engaged to a woman, but another man will rape her. You will build a house but not live in it. You will plant a vineyard but not enjoy its fruit. ³¹ Your ox will be slaughtered before your eyes, but you will not eat any of it. Your donkey will be taken away from you and not returned to you. Your flock will be given to your enemies, and no one will help you. ³² Your sons and daughters will be given to another people, while your eyes grow weary looking for them every day. But you will be powerless to do anything. ³³ A people you don’t know will eat your land’s produce and everything you have labored for. You will only be oppressed and crushed continually. ³⁴ You will be driven mad by what you see. ³⁵ The Lord will afflict you with painful and incurable boils on your knees and thighs—from the sole of your foot to the top of your head.

³⁶ “The Lord will bring you and your king that you have appointed to a nation neither you nor your ancestors have known, and there you will worship other gods, of wood and stone. ³⁷ You will become an object of horror, scorn, and ridicule among all the peoples where the Lord will drive you.

³⁸ “You will sow much seed in the field but harvest little, because locusts will devour it. ³⁹ You will plant and cultivate vineyards but not drink the wine or gather the grapes, because worms will eat them. ⁴⁰ You will have olive trees throughout your territory but not moisten your skin with oil, because your olives will drop off. ⁴¹ You will father sons and daughters, but they will not remain yours, because they will be taken prisoner. ⁴² Buzzing insects will take possession of all your trees and your land’s produce. ⁴³ The resident alien among you will rise higher and higher above you, while you sink lower and lower. ⁴⁴ He will lend to you, but you won’t lend to him. He will be the head, and you will be the tail.

⁴⁵ “All these curses will come, pursue, and overtake you until you are destroyed, since you did not obey the Lord your God and keep the commands and statutes he gave you. ⁴⁶ These curses will be a sign and a wonder against you and your descendants forever. ⁴⁷ Because you didn’t serve the Lord your God with joy and a cheerful heart, even though you had an abundance of everything, ⁴⁸ you will serve your enemies that the Lord will send against you, in famine, thirst, nakedness, and a lack of everything. He will place an iron yoke on your neck until he has destroyed you. ⁴⁹ The Lord will bring a nation from far away, from the ends of the earth, to swoop down on you like an eagle, a nation whose language you won’t understand, ⁵⁰ a ruthless nation, showing no respect for the old and not sparing the young. ⁵¹ They will eat the offspring of your livestock and your land’s produce until you are destroyed. They will leave you no grain, new wine, fresh oil, young of your herds, or newborn of your flocks until they cause you to perish. ⁵² They will besiege you within all your city gates until your high and fortified walls, that you trust in, come down throughout your land. They will besiege you within all your city gates throughout the land the Lord your God has given you.

⁵³ “You will eat your offspring, the flesh of your sons and daughters the Lord your God has given

you during the siege and hardship your enemy imposes on you. ⁵⁴ The most sensitive and refined man among you will look grudgingly at his brother, the wife he embraces, and the rest of his children, ⁵⁵ refusing to share with any of them his children's flesh that he will eat because he has nothing left during the siege and hardship your enemy imposes on you in all your towns. ⁵⁶ The most sensitive and refined woman among you, who would not venture to set the sole of her foot on the ground because of her refinement and sensitivity, will begrudge the husband she embraces, her son, and her daughter, ⁵⁷ the afterbirth that comes out from between her legs and the children she bears, because she will secretly eat them for lack of anything else during the siege and hardship your enemy imposes on you within your city gates.

⁵⁸ "If you are not careful to obey all the words of this law, which are written in this scroll, by fearing this glorious and awe-inspiring name—the Lord, your God— ⁵⁹ he will bring wondrous plagues on you and your descendants, severe and lasting plagues, and terrible and chronic sicknesses. ⁶⁰ He will afflict you again with all the diseases of Egypt, which you dreaded, and they will cling to you. ⁶¹ The Lord will also afflict you with every sickness and plague not recorded in the book of this law, until you are destroyed. ⁶² Though you were as numerous as the stars of the sky, you will be left with only a few people, because you did not obey the Lord your God. ⁶³ Just as the Lord was glad to cause you to prosper and to multiply you, so he will also be glad to cause you to perish and to destroy you. You will be ripped out of the land you are entering to possess. ⁶⁴ Then the Lord will scatter you among all peoples from one end of the earth to the other, and there you will worship other gods, of wood and stone, which neither you nor your ancestors have known. ⁶⁵ You will find no peace among those nations, and there will be no resting place for the sole of your foot. There the Lord will give you a trembling heart, failing eyes, and a despondent spirit. ⁶⁶ Your life will hang

in doubt before you. You will be in dread night and day, never certain of survival. ⁶⁷ In the morning you will say, 'If only it were evening!' and in the evening you will say, 'If only it were morning!'—because of the dread you will have in your heart and because of what you will see. ⁶⁸ The Lord will take you back in ships to Egypt by a route that I said you would never see again. There you will sell yourselves to your enemies as male and female slaves, but no one will buy you."

Deuteronomy 28:1-14

What do you notice about the blessings God promises? Which ones stand out to you?

How would other nations be impacted both positively and negatively by Israel's blessings?

What condition did God place on Israel receiving these blessings?

Does God only bless those who obey Him? (See Psalm 145:9, Psalm 145:15-16, Matthew 5:45b). Besides physical blessings, what other good can come from obeying God? (See Psalm 23).

What temptation might we face when we are blessed with good things in life? How might this list of specific blessings for obedience help Israel in their relationship with God?

How have you experienced the blessings of God in your own life?

Deuteronomy 28:15-68

How does it feel to read this list of curses for disobedience? What do you notice and observe?

Define the word “curse” in the context of this passage.

What reasons does God offer for Israel receiving these curses? (See vs. 15, 20, 45, 47, 58, and 62).

Scripture describes many of these curses being fulfilled for Israel.
See the following passages and list the curses from Deuteronomy 28
which are fulfilled in these passages:

2 Kings 6:24-30, 2 Kings 24:8-14

Lamentations 4:1-11

Joel 1:1-12

2 Kings 17:1-23

Are God's people today still at risk of facing God's curses? Why or why not? How else might we explain the causes or purpose of suffering we face as people saved by God's grace through Jesus' sacrifice?

How can suffering impact our relationship with God either for better or worse?

Reflections:

Whereas Deuteronomy 27 contains general instruction regarding blessings and curses, Deuteronomy 28 becomes much more specific. This chapter is arranged in a way that is similar to ancient treaties in which blessings and curses for adhering to or breaking from an agreement between warring nations were established. Ultimately, God's desire is that many will come to know Him and enter into a relationship with Him. His purpose in choosing Israel as His holy people and establishing these blessings for obedience and curses for disobedience is so that, either way, the nations of the world would stand in awe of what Israel's God could do and to know that there is a God more powerful than those they worshiped. Verse 63 makes this truth clear in saying, "Just as the Lord was glad to cause you to prosper and to multiply you, so He will also be glad to cause you to perish and to destroy you." God does not delight in destroying Israel, but He will use this means to reveal Himself to the world.

Moses starts with the blessings, because obedience out of love for God in hope of his favor is far superior to obedience out of fear of His wrath. Israel would not be able to avoid these overflowing blessings which are promised to encompass all of life: occurring wherever they go, extending to their offspring and flocks, ensuring abundant food and the defeat of their enemies, establishing Israel as God's holy people. We know that God blesses all people (Psalm 145:9), but this abundance is reserved for Israel as God's chosen people. The obedience necessary to receive these blessings is not just a one time event, but requires the people to "walk in His ways" (vs. 9) in an ongoing covenant relationship with the Lord which will reveal the glory of the Lord to the surrounding nations. With this extensive list of prophesied blessings for the people as they live in loving obedience to God, we might wonder why Israel would ever choose to disobey the Lord!

But, of course, human nature is affected so completely by sin that we forget the Giver of all things and take credit for accomplishing the good in our lives. So Moses continues by divinely predicting what would happen when Israel rebelled against the Lord their God. The generalities of chapter 27 are replaced with multiplied specifics too overwhelming to grasp: occurring wherever they go, resulting in lack of food, extending to offspring and flocks, causing pestilence and diseases, reducing farmland to dust, harming family members, removing possessions, and ending in death, defeat, and slavery. This list of curses for disobedience reveals acute suffering which we know were fulfilled throughout Israel's history.

As believers today, we might be tempted to view our suffering as God's punishment or wrath for disobedience in our own lives. God certainly does allow natural pain and consequences for our sin and corrects us as a father corrects a child. But, as stated in the previous lesson, believers need not fear the wrath of God because Jesus has taken it all on Himself. Instead, let us persevere in obedience to enjoy God's good gifts and unbroken fellowship with Him.



WEEK 19:

Deuteronomy 29-30

29 These are the words of the covenant that the Lord commanded Moses to make with the Israelites in the land of Moab, in addition to the covenant he had made with them at Horeb. ² Moses summoned all Israel and said to them, “You have seen with your own eyes everything the Lord did in Egypt to Pharaoh, to all his officials, and to his entire land. ³ You saw with your own eyes the great trials and those great signs and wonders. ⁴ Yet to this day the Lord has not given you a mind to understand, eyes to see, or ears to hear. ⁵ I led you forty years in the wilderness; your clothes and the sandals on your feet did not wear out; ⁶ you did not eat food or drink wine or beer—so that you might know that I am the Lord your God. ⁷ When you reached this place, King Sihon of Heshbon and King Og of Bashan came out against us in battle, but we defeated them. ⁸ We took their land and gave it as an inheritance to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh. ⁹ Therefore, observe the words of this covenant and follow them, so that you will succeed in everything you do.

¹⁰ “All of you are standing today before the Lord your God—your leaders, tribes, elders, officials, all the men of Israel, ¹¹ your dependents, your wives, and the resident aliens in your camps who cut your wood and draw your water— ¹² so that you may enter into the covenant of the Lord your God, which he is making with you today, so that you may enter into his oath ¹³ and so that he may establish you today as his people and he may be your God as he promised you and as he swore to your ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. ¹⁴ I am making this covenant and this oath not only with you, ¹⁵ but also with those who are

standing here with us today in the presence of the Lord our God and with those who are not here today.

¹⁶ “Indeed, you know how we lived in the land of Egypt and passed through the nations where you traveled. ¹⁷ You saw their abhorrent images and idols made of wood, stone, silver, and gold, which were among them. ¹⁸ Be sure there is no man, woman, clan, or tribe among you today whose heart turns away from the Lord our God to go and worship the gods of those nations. Be sure there is no root among you bearing poisonous and bitter fruit. ¹⁹ When someone hears the words of this oath, he may consider himself exempt, thinking, ‘I will have peace even though I follow my own stubborn heart.’ This will lead to the destruction of the well-watered land as well as the dry land. ²⁰ The Lord will not be willing to forgive him. Instead, his anger and jealousy will burn against that person, and every curse written in this scroll will descend on him. The Lord will blot out his name under heaven, ²¹ and single him out for harm from all the tribes of Israel, according to all the curses of the covenant written in this book of the law.

²² “Future generations of your children who follow you and the foreigner who comes from a distant country will see the plagues of that land and the sicknesses the Lord has inflicted on it. ²³ All its soil will be a burning waste of sulfur and salt, unsown, producing nothing, with no plant growing on it, just like the fall of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboiim, which the Lord demolished in his fierce anger. ²⁴ All the nations will ask, ‘Why has the Lord done this to this land? Why this intense outburst of anger?’ ²⁵ Then people will answer, ‘It is because they abandoned the covenant of

the Lord, the God of their ancestors, which he had made with them when he brought them out of the land of Egypt. ²⁶ They began to serve other gods, bowing in worship to gods they had not known—gods that the Lord had not permitted them to worship. ²⁷ Therefore the Lord's anger burned against this land, and he brought every curse written in this book on it. ²⁸ The Lord uprooted them from their land in his anger, rage, and intense wrath, and threw them into another land where they are today.' ²⁹ The hidden things belong to the Lord our God, but the revealed things belong to us and our children forever, so that we may follow all the words of this law.

30 “When all these things happen to you—the blessings and curses I have set before you—and you come to your senses while you are in all the nations where the Lord your God has driven you, ² and you and your children return to the Lord your God and obey him with all your heart and all your soul by doing everything I am commanding you today, ³ then he will restore your fortunes, have compassion on you, and gather you again from all the peoples where the Lord your God has scattered you. ⁴ Even if your exiles are at the farthest horizon, he will gather you and bring you back from there. ⁵ The Lord your God will bring you into the land your ancestors possessed, and you will take possession of it. He will cause you to prosper and multiply you more than he did your ancestors. ⁶ The Lord your God will circumcise your heart and the hearts of your descendants, and you will love him with all your heart and all your soul so that you will live. ⁷ The Lord your God will put all these curses on your enemies who hate and persecute you. ⁸ Then you will again obey him and follow all his commands I am commanding you today. ⁹ The Lord your God will make you prosper abundantly in all the work of your hands, your offspring, the offspring of your livestock, and the produce of your land. Indeed, the Lord will again delight in your prosperity, as he delighted in that of your

ancestors, ¹⁰ when you obey the Lord your God by keeping his commands and statutes that are written in this book of the law and return to him with all your heart and all your soul.

¹¹ “This command that I give you today is certainly not too difficult or beyond your reach. ¹² It is not in heaven so that you have to ask, ‘Who will go up to heaven, get it for us, and proclaim it to us so that we may follow it?’ ¹³ And it is not across the sea so that you have to ask, ‘Who will cross the sea, get it for us, and proclaim it to us so that we may follow it?’ ¹⁴ But the message is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, so that you may follow it. ¹⁵ See, today I have set before you life and prosperity, death and adversity. ¹⁶ For I am commanding you today to love the Lord your God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commands, statutes, and ordinances, so that you may live and multiply, and the Lord your God may bless you in the land you are entering to possess. ¹⁷ But if your heart turns away and you do not listen and you are led astray to bow in worship to other gods and serve them, ¹⁸ I tell you today that you will certainly perish and will not prolong your days in the land you are entering to possess across the Jordan. ¹⁹ I call heaven and earth as witnesses against you today that I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse. Choose life so that you and your descendants may live, ²⁰ love the Lord your God, obey him, and remain faithful to him. For he is your life, and he will prolong your days as you live in the land the Lord swore to give to your ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.”

What does it mean that the Israelites will “prosper in everything” they do (v9)?
How does carefully following God’s law lead to prosperity?

How are we prone to see and follow idols of this world? In what ways do we fool ourselves to think “we will be safe, even though we persist in going our own way” (V19)?

Read 2 Chronicles 7:11-22. How is the language similar? Why might God repeat this warning at the completion of building the temple?

Read Leviticus 25:3-5 and 2 Chronicles 36:20-21. What part of the covenant was ignored in the Promised Land that would lead to 70 years of captivity? How might this apply to us today?

Deuteronomy 30:1-10

Read the following passages and write out the prophetic promises given to the Israelites. Notice similarities from Moses' pronouncement.

Amos 9:11-15

Hosea 14:4-9

Jeremiah 3:11-25

Ezekiel 11:14-21

Deuteronomy 30:11-20

How does verse 11 instruct the Israelites to view God's commands? Now read 1 John 5:2-4. How are we to view God's commands? (Optional: Read Psalm 119).

Consider Deuteronomy 6:4-9. How might having the Law of God constantly on your heart and lips lead to "life and prosperity?"

Read John 10:1-21. How does this passage coincide with verses 11-21?

Read Romans 10:5-10. How does Paul use the language of verses 11-14 to build upon the truths of Moses?

Reflections:

Moses reminds the people of their history with God on the heels of God pronouncing the inevitable blessings and cursings that will fall on Israel as they either obey or divert their allegiance. All throughout Deuteronomy, the people of Israel are told to remember their past. They must trust the story God is writing and remember His previous faithfulness in order to boldly trust Him in the next chapter of their lives. God reminds them how He provided every basic need for them, none of which was by their own strength or power. This was meant to show them their utter dependence on the Lord and His provision.

In verse 4 and verse 29 the people are told they have not been given the full scope of God's plan. In His sovereignty He peeled back His plan in layers revealing to them only what was necessary. How often do we beg God for broader knowledge of a situation only to be given just enough of what we need for obedience? We are not meant to carry the load of this expansive knowledge, and in God's grace He reveals Himself as needed.

Moses calls for every person, including foreigners, to adhere to the renewed covenant. God divinely chose the nation of Israel but did not withhold his grace from those willing to step into the fold and under His loving hand. What becomes clear throughout the scroll of Deuteronomy and in this final discourse is that with high calling comes heavy responsibility. Israel (and we) must resist the temptation to divert our allegiance away from God and continue to love and obey Him in not only our hearts but in our actions. God has promised life and prosperity within the loving boundaries of His Law. As Israel's story unfolds, we see the propensity to wander and how death and destruction follow as they choose their own way rather than the ways of God. But even in the reminder that they will be held accountable for their actions, God reminds them of His sufficient grace. Israel would break the covenant; yet God still promised to inevitably forgive the people and redeem the land if they repented.

In Deuteronomy 30:11, Moses states a poignant truth that these Laws are not beyond their reach. God uses hyperbolic language to show that the Law is within their comprehension and ability. He then gives drastic alternative paths to showcase the clarity in which they should choose the LORD.

The consequences of human sin are devastating not only personally but communally. Daily obedience was important since God would use Israel as conduits of blessing and representatives of His character to surrounding nations. They must remember who their allegiance is to and give exclusive loyalty to God as they remembered the covenant they agreed to. They were to bring blessing and prosperity to the ends of the earth, and this would begin by daily choosing God in ongoing worship, teaching, and action. The promise of abundant life would be taught and passed down to the next generations as they lived within the gracious promises of their God.



WEEK 20:

Deuteronomy 31

17 Then Moses continued to speak these words to all Israel, ² saying, “I am now ¹²⁰ years old; I can no longer act as your leader. The Lord has told me, ‘You will not cross the Jordan.’ ³ The Lord your God is the one who will cross ahead of you. He will destroy these nations before you, and you will drive them out. Joshua is the one who will cross ahead of you, as the Lord has said. ⁴ The Lord will deal with them as he did Sihon and Og, the kings of the Amorites, and their land when he destroyed them. ⁵ The Lord will deliver them over to you, and you must do to them exactly as I have commanded you. ⁶ Be strong and courageous; don’t be terrified or afraid of them. For the Lord your God is the one who will go with you; he will not leave you or abandon you.”

⁷ Moses then summoned Joshua and said to him in the sight of all Israel, “Be strong and courageous, for you will go with this people into the land the Lord swore to give to their ancestors. You will enable them to take possession of it. ⁸ The Lord is the one who will go before you. He will be with you; he will not leave you or abandon you. Do not be afraid or discouraged.”

⁹ Moses wrote down this law and gave it to the priests, the sons of Levi, who carried the ark of the Lord’s covenant, and to all the elders of Israel. ¹⁰ Moses commanded them, “At the end of every seven years, at the appointed time in the year of debt cancellation, during the Festival of Shelters, ¹¹ when all Israel assembles in the presence of the Lord your God at the place he chooses, you are to read this law aloud before all Israel. ¹² Gather the people—men, women, dependents, and the resident aliens within your city gates—so that they may

listen and learn to fear the Lord your God and be careful to follow all the words of this law. ¹³ Then their children who do not know the law will listen and learn to fear the Lord your God as long as you live in the land you are crossing the Jordan to possess.”

¹⁴ The Lord said to Moses, “The time of your death is now approaching. Call Joshua and present yourselves at the tent of meeting so that I may commission him.” When Moses and Joshua went and presented themselves at the tent of meeting, ¹⁵ the Lord appeared at the tent in a pillar of cloud, and the cloud stood at the entrance to the tent.

¹⁶ The Lord said to Moses, “You are about to rest with your ancestors, and these people will soon prostitute themselves with the foreign gods of the land they are entering. They will abandon me and break the covenant I have made with them. ¹⁷ My anger will burn against them on that day; I will abandon them and hide my face from them so that they will become easy prey. Many troubles and afflictions will come to them. On that day they will say, ‘Haven’t these troubles come to us because our God is no longer with us?’ ¹⁸ I will certainly hide my face on that day because of all the evil they have done by turning to other gods. ¹⁹ Therefore write down this song for yourselves and teach it to the Israelites; have them sing it, so that this song may be a witness for me against the Israelites. ²⁰ When I bring them into the land I swore to give their ancestors, a land flowing with milk and honey, they will eat their fill and prosper. They will turn to other gods and worship them, despising me and breaking my covenant. ²¹ And when many troubles and afflictions come to them, this song will testify against them, because their

descendants will not have forgotten it. For I know what they are prone to do, even before I bring them into the land I swore to give them.”

²² So Moses wrote down this song on that day and taught it to the Israelites.

²³ The Lord commissioned Joshua son of Nun, “Be strong and courageous, for you will bring the Israelites into the land I swore to them, and I will be with you.”

²⁴ When Moses had finished writing down on a scroll every single word of this law, ²⁵ he commanded the Levites who carried the ark of the Lord’s covenant, ²⁶ “Take this book of the law and place it beside the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God so that it may remain there as a witness against you. ²⁷ For I know how rebellious and stiff-necked you are. If you are rebelling against the Lord now, while I am still alive, how much more will you rebel after I am dead! ²⁸ Assemble all your tribal elders and officers before me so that I may speak these words directly to them and call heaven and earth as witnesses against them. ²⁹ For I know that after my death you will become completely corrupt and turn from the path I have commanded you. Disaster will come to you in the future, because you will do what is evil in the Lord’s sight, angering him with what your hands have made.” ³⁰ Then Moses recited aloud every single word of this song to the entire assembly of Israel:

Deuteronomy 31:1-13

At this point, Moses has led Israel for 40 years. How does he encourage them as they prepare to go into Canaan without him?

Why do you think it was important for Israel to hear that God would not leave or abandon them? How do those words encourage you?

How does Moses expand this reminder as he commissions Joshua to lead the people? How would these words be particularly encouraging to Joshua?

What do we know about Joshua's life before being tasked with leading Israel into Canaan? (See Exodus 17:8-16, Exodus 24:13, Numbers 13-14, Numbers 27:12-20)

What instructions does Moses give to the Levites?

Why is it important for godly people to equip others to serve the Lord?
What godly people have invested in you, and in whom are you investing?

Deuteronomy 31:14-30

What does it mean that God appeared in a pillar of cloud? (See Exodus 13:21, Exodus 33:7-11).
What is significant about this appearance of the Lord?

What information does God share with Moses and Joshua at the tent of meeting?

Why does God say, “These people will soon prostitute themselves...” to describe their worship of foreign gods? What does this teach us about the kind of relationship we have with God?

What do you think it means for God to hide His face (vs. 18)? When have you felt like God was hiding His face from you? How did the situation resolve?

How do you think Moses and Joshua both received this message from the Lord? How might it be a blessing for each of them to hear these prophetic words about Israel as Moses ends his leadership and Joshua takes on that role?

Why do you think God instructed Moses and Joshua to teach Israel a song? What makes a song an effective means of communication?

Reflections:

Moses now turns his attention to preparing the people to move on without him. This is a significant loss because Israel would lose Moses as their spiritual leader who acted as an intermediary between them and God. Moses calls the people to “be strong and courageous,” assuring them that God would deliver their enemies over to them so Israel could completely annihilate them as Moses had previously commanded (Deuteronomy 7:1-6). Moses commissions Joshua in the presence of Israel, bestowing on him the charge to lead the people into the promised land with the prophetic words, “You will enable them to take possession of it,” giving Joshua confidence that the battles ahead would be successful.

Moses entrusts the written words of this “second law” (what we know as the book of Deuteronomy) to the Levites who will serve as the spiritual leadership for Israel into the future as they settle throughout the land. He instructed the Levites to publicly read the law every seven years when slaves were freed and Israel gathered to celebrate during the Feast of Tabernacles. In this way, the younger generations will hear these important messages about what it means to be the holy and chosen people of God. This reading of the law is modeled in Nehemiah 8:1-8, but it does not seem this was a regular occurrence in Israel.

God calls Moses and Joshua to present themselves at the tent of meeting where God appeared in a pillar of cloud as He had so many times through Israel’s 40 years of wandering in the wilderness. This is the only time Deuteronomy mentions God appearing in this way, though it is mentioned several times in Exodus and Numbers. Here, God shares with Moses and Joshua the troubling truth of Israel’s future - that the people would “prostitute themselves” with foreign gods, breaking their covenantal relationship with Him. This description of idolatry reminds believers today that the church is the bride of Christ (Revelation 19:7), and to worship other gods is to commit adultery against our God. Moses was not likely surprised by these words, but it must have been challenging to invest so much in people who ultimately rejected his guidance and instruction. God instructs Moses to write a song, knowing that music has lasting power in the hearts and minds of people. This song would bear witness against Israel in the future when they ultimately faced the curses God would bring for their rebellion. God commissions Joshua as the military leader of Israel and assures him of victory even in light of the people’s future disobedience which is significant encouragement, given what Moses has previously shared about the curses which will result from disobedience to God.

This chapter ends with Moses completing the work of writing “every single word of this law” on a scroll and again instructing the Levites to keep it near the Ark of the Covenant to bear witness against Israel’s future rebellion. In the same way, God has provided His Word to us along with spiritual leaders and fellow believers that we might be encouraged to put off sin and remain faithful to Him.



WEEK 21:

Deuteronomy 32

32 Pay attention, heavens, and I will speak; listen, earth, to the words from my mouth.

² Let my teaching fall like rain
and my word settle like dew,
like gentle rain on new grass
and showers on tender plants.

³ For I will proclaim the Lord's name.
Declare the greatness of our God!

⁴ The Rock—his work is perfect;
all his ways are just.
A faithful God, without bias,
he is righteous and true.

⁵ His people have acted corruptly toward him;
this is their defect—they are not his children
but a devious and crooked generation.

⁶ Is this how you repay the Lord,
you foolish and senseless people?
Isn't he your Father and Creator?
Didn't he make you and sustain you?

⁷ Remember the days of old;
consider the years of past generations.
Ask your father, and he will tell you,
your elders, and they will teach you.

⁸ When the Most High gave the nations their inheritance
and divided the human race,
he set the boundaries of the peoples
according to the number of the people of
Israel.

⁹ But the Lord's portion is his people,
Jacob, his own inheritance.

¹⁰ He found him in a desolate land,
in a barren, howling wilderness;
he surrounded him, cared for him,
and protected him as the pupil of his eye.

¹¹ He watches over his nest like an eagle
and hovers over his young;
he spreads his wings, catches him,
and carries him on his feathers.

¹² The Lord alone led him,
with no help from a foreign god.

¹³ He made him ride on the heights of the land
and eat the produce of the field.
He nourished him with honey from the rock
and oil from flinty rock,

¹⁴ curds from the herd and milk from the flock,
with the fat of lambs,
rams from Bashan, and goats,
with the choicest grains of wheat;
you drank wine from the finest grapes.

¹⁵ Then Jeshurun became fat and rebelled—
you became fat, bloated, and gorged.
He abandoned the God who made him
and scorned the Rock of his salvation.

¹⁶ They provoked his jealousy with different
gods;
they enraged him with detestable practices.

¹⁷ They sacrificed to demons, not God,
to gods they had not known,
new gods that had just arrived,
which your ancestors did not fear.

¹⁸ You ignored the Rock who gave you birth;
you forgot the God who gave birth to you.

¹⁹ When the Lord saw this, he despised them,
angered by his sons and daughters.

²⁰ He said, “I will hide my face from them;
I will see what will become of them,
for they are a perverse generation—
unfaithful children.

²¹ They have provoked my jealousy
with what is not a god;
they have enraged me with their worthless
idols.

So I will provoke their jealousy
with what is not a people;
I will enrage them with a foolish nation.

²² For fire has been kindled because of my
anger
and burns to the depths of Sheol;
it devours the land and its produce,
and scorches the foundations
of the mountains.

²³ “I will pile disasters on them;
I will use up my arrows against them.

²⁴ They will be weak from hunger,
ravaged by pestilence and bitter plague;
I will unleash on them wild beasts with fangs,
as well as venomous snakes that slither in
the dust.

²⁵ Outside, the sword will take their children,
and inside, there will be terror;
the young man and the young woman will
be killed,
the infant and the gray-haired man.

²⁶ “I would have said: I will cut them to pieces
and blot out the memory of them from
mankind,

²⁷ if I had not feared provocation from the
enemy,
or feared that these foes
might misunderstand
and say, ‘Our own hand has prevailed;
it wasn’t the Lord who did all this.’”

²⁸ Israel is a nation lacking sense
with no understanding at all.

²⁹ If only they were wise, they would
comprehend this;
they would understand their fate.

³⁰ How could one pursue a thousand,
or two put ten thousand to flight,
unless their Rock had sold them,
unless the Lord had given them up?

³¹ But their “rock” is not like our Rock,
as even our enemies concede.

³² For their vine is from the vine of Sodom
and from the fields of Gomorrah.

Their grapes are poisonous;
their clusters are bitter.

³³ Their wine is serpents’ venom,
the deadly poison of cobras.

³⁴ “Is it not stored up with me,
sealed up in my vaults?

³⁵ Vengeance and retribution belong to me.
In time their foot will slip,
for their day of disaster is near,
and their doom is coming quickly.”

³⁶ The Lord will indeed vindicate his people
and have compassion on his servants
when he sees that their strength is gone
and no one is left—slave or free.

³⁷ He will say, “Where are their gods,
the ‘rock’ they found refuge in?

³⁸ Who ate the fat of their sacrifices
and drank the wine of their drink offerings?
Let them rise up and help you;
let it be a shelter for you.

³⁹ See now that I alone am he;
there is no God but me.

I bring death and I give life;
I wound and I heal.

No one can rescue anyone from my power.

⁴⁰ I raise my hand to heaven and declare:
As surely as I live forever,

⁴¹ when I sharpen my flashing sword,
and my hand takes hold of judgment,
I will take vengeance on my adversaries
and repay those who hate me.

⁴² I will make my arrows drunk with blood
while my sword devours flesh—
the blood of the slain and the captives,
the heads of the enemy leaders.”

⁴³ Rejoice, you nations,
concerning his people,
for he will avenge the blood of his servants.
He will take vengeance on his adversaries;
he will purify his land and his people.

⁴⁴ Moses came with Joshua son of Nun
and recited all the words of this song in the
presence of the people. ⁴⁵ After Moses finished
reciting all these words to all Israel, ⁴⁶ he said
to them, “Take to heart all these words I am
giving as a warning to you today, so that you
may command your children to follow all the
words of this law carefully. ⁴⁷ For they are not
meaningless words to you but they are your
life, and by them you will live long in the land
you are crossing the Jordan to possess.”

⁴⁸ On that same day the Lord spoke to Moses,
⁴⁹ “Go up Mount Nebo in the Abarim range
in the land of Moab, across from Jericho,
and view the land of Canaan I am giving the
Israelites as a possession. ⁵⁰ Then you will die
on the mountain that you go up, and you will
be gathered to your people, just as your brother
Aaron died on Mount Hor and was gathered
to his people. ⁵¹ For both of you broke faith
with me among the Israelites at the Waters of
Meribath-kadesh in the Wilderness of Zin by
failing to treat me as holy in their presence.
⁵² Although from a distance you will view the
land that I am giving the Israelites, you will not
go there.”

Deuteronomy 32:1-6

Read Exodus 33:19 and Deuteronomy 5:11.

What does it mean that God's name will be proclaimed?

How does God's character traits of faithful and just bring you encouragement?

Recall Deuteronomy 1:30-31. Who had God been to Israel?

Deuteronomy 32:7-14

List the actions of God mentioned in these verses:

Who are the mentors in your life that can remind you of God’s faithfulness? Who do you turn to when you need to “remember the days of old?”

Verses 10-11 mentions the state of Israel when God rescued them. What are the ways in which you are drawn to forget about God’s provision and care over your life? What practices can be put into place to alleviate your propensity to wander?

Deuteronomy 32:15-33

In what ways do you find yourself stubborn and kicking against God’s Word?

What factors could have made Israel succumb to foreign idolatry?

Deuteronomy 32:44-52

Read Numbers 20:1-13. How did Moses not uphold the holiness of the Lord?

Read the account of the transfiguration in the gospels (Matt 17:1-9 Mark 9:2-9 Luke 9:28-36). Why are Moses and Elijah part of this event? What does Moses represent to the people of Israel?

Who are the people in your life that you share God's Word and truth with? Are there people you could be intentionally sharing with who do not know God? Does it include the next generation?

Explain what could be meant by the phrase,
"They are not just idle words for you—they are your life."

Reflections:

Moses has been rather specific in announcing God's faithfulness to Israel as he calls them to keep the commands of the covenant. In this song, which becomes a national anthem to Israel, Moses removes the language of specificity and uses broad statements to keep the song eternally relevant. This song would be used when the people would assemble for worship and would be a poignant reminder of who God is and what He desires from His people.

Moses evokes imagery that God's words are beneficial and abundant for His people and His creation, i.e. the entire created order. God is multifaceted; He is gracious, powerful, righteous, faithful, and just. His name will be proclaimed and His people must represent His character holistically. In verses 5-6 Moses recounts that the people have fallen so far from their loyalty, they no longer resemble themselves as His children. They are said to have become corrupt and forgetful, inevitably flouting God's grace in the process. On the heels of verse 7, which is the final "remember" statement in Deuteronomy, the song continues with how God handed Israel over to their proclivities of sin. Paul picks up on this motif (and many others from this song) in Romans 1:18-32. Time and time again, God has spoken of His requirement for Israel to worship Him only and that failure to adhere would provoke His loving punishment.

God had chosen Israel, provided for them, cared for them, and nourished them. In verse 15 Israel is compared to a fattened animal stubbornly kicking their caretaker. It seems that in times of lack people are more willing to submit to God and cling to His promises; yet in times of abundance is when God's people reach dangerous ground or complacency and pride. As Paul pulls on this same theme in Romans 5, we are reminded that Jesus Christ came and stood in the gap, inviting us in (even as outsiders) to be reconciled to God on His perfect merit. Christ came to usher in a new kingdom that would divinely equip God's people to adhere to His laws and bring about shalom to the world.

Moses continues with the divine wrath that will be shown to perpetual enemies of God unwilling to submit themselves under His hand. What is clear is that God takes rebellion against His ways seriously and that there will be peace for God's people in the end. God is faithful even when his people are faithless.

Verse 45 is yet another reminder that Israel is to pass these words and reminders onto the next generation. God's word is not to remain idle nor does it remain stagnant in the hands of His people. We cannot claim belief without obedience (Romans 1:5). This section finishes with the reminder that Moses has forfeited entrance into the Promised Land due to his faithlessness at the waters of Meribah Kadesh. God grants Moses a glimpse of the Promised Land and declares that he will die on Mount Nebo. Although Moses does not get to enter the Promised Land in this part of Israel's story, he will one day stand in the land on the Mount of Transfiguration shoulder to shoulder with Elijah and Jesus Christ (Matt 17:1-9 Mark 9:2-9 Luke 9:28-36). The warnings of this chapter remind Israel that God will hold them accountable for their disloyalty while still remaining merciful and compassionate to gather them and forgive them in the end.



WEEK 22:

Deuteronomy 33-34

33 This is the blessing that Moses, the man of God, gave the Israelites before his death. ² He said:

The Lord came from Sinai
and appeared to them from Seir;
he shone on them from Mount Paran
and came with ten thousand holy ones,
with lightning from his right hand for them.

³ Indeed he loves the people.

All your holy ones are in your hand,
and they assemble at your feet.

Each receives your words.

⁴ Moses gave us instruction,
a possession for the assembly of Jacob.

⁵ So he became King in Jeshurun
when the leaders of the people gathered
with the tribes of Israel.

⁶ Let Reuben live and not die
though his people become few.

⁷ He said this about Judah:

Lord, hear Judah's cry and bring him to his
people.

He fights for his cause with his own hands,
but may you be a help against his foes.

⁸ He said about Levi:

Your Thummim and Urim belong to your
faithful one;

you tested him at Massah
and contended with him at the Waters of
Meribah.

⁹ He said about his father and mother,
"I do not regard them."

He disregarded his brothers
and didn't acknowledge his sons,
for they kept your word
and maintained your covenant.

¹⁰ They will teach your ordinances to Jacob
and your instruction to Israel;
they will set incense before you
and whole burnt offerings on your altar.

¹¹ Lord, bless his possessions,
and accept the work of his hands.

Break the back of his adversaries and
enemies,

so that they cannot rise again.

¹² He said about Benjamin:

The Lord's beloved rests securely on him.

He shields him all day long,
and he rests on his shoulders.

¹³ He said about Joseph:

May his land be blessed by the Lord
with the dew of heaven's bounty

and the watery depths that lie beneath;

¹⁴ with the bountiful harvest from the sun

and the abundant yield of the seasons;

¹⁵ with the best products of the ancient
mountains

and the bounty of the eternal hills;

¹⁶ with the choice gifts of the land

and everything in it;

and with the favor of him

who appeared in the burning bush.

May these rest on the head of Joseph,

on the brow of the prince of his brothers.

¹⁷ His firstborn bull has splendor,

and horns like those of a wild ox;
he gores all the peoples with them
to the ends of the earth.
Such are the ten thousands of Ephraim,
and such are the thousands of Manasseh.

¹⁸ He said about Zebulun:

Rejoice, Zebulun, in your journeys,
and Issachar, in your tents.

¹⁹ They summon the peoples to a mountain;
there they offer acceptable sacrifices.
For they draw from the wealth of the seas
and the hidden treasures of the sand.

²⁰ He said about Gad:

The one who enlarges Gad's territory
will be blessed.
He lies down like a lion
and tears off an arm or even a head.

²¹ He chose the best part for himself,
because a ruler's portion was assigned there
for him.
He came with the leaders of the people;
he carried out the Lord's justice
and his ordinances for Israel.

²² He said about Dan:

Dan is a young lion,
leaping out of Bashan.

²³ He said about Naphtali:

Naphtali, enjoying approval,
full of the Lord's blessing,
take possession to the west and the south.

²⁴ He said about Asher:

May Asher be the most blessed of the sons;
may he be the most favored among his
brothers and dip his foot in olive oil.

²⁵ May the bolts of your gate be iron and
bronze,
and your strength last as long as you live.

²⁶ There is none like the God of Jeshurun,
who rides the heavens to your aid,
the clouds in his majesty.

²⁷ The God of old is your dwelling place,
and underneath are the everlasting arms.
He drives out the enemy before you
and commands, "Destroy!"

²⁸ So Israel dwells securely;
Jacob lives untroubled
in a land of grain and new wine;
even his skies drip with dew.

²⁹ How happy you are, Israel!

Who is like you,
a people saved by the Lord?
He is the shield that protects you,
the sword you boast in.

Your enemies will cringe before you,
and you will tread on their backs.

34 Then Moses went up from the plains of Moab to Mount Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, which faces Jericho, and the Lord showed him all the land: Gilead as far as Dan, ² all of Naphtali, the land of Ephraim and Manasseh, all the land of Judah as far as the Mediterranean Sea, ³ the Negev, and the plain in the Valley of Jericho, the City of Palms, as far as Zoar. ⁴ The Lord then said to him, "This is the land I promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, 'I will give it to your descendants.' I have let you see it with your own eyes, but you will not cross into it."

⁵ So Moses the servant of the Lord died there in the land of Moab, according to the Lord's word. ⁶ He buried him in the valley in the land of Moab facing Beth-peor, and no one to this day knows where his grave is. ⁷ Moses was one hundred twenty years old when he died; his eyes were not weak, and his vitality had not left him. ⁸ The Israelites wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days. Then the days of weeping and mourning for Moses came to an end.

⁹ Joshua son of Nun was filled with the spirit of wisdom because Moses had laid his hands on him. So the Israelites obeyed him and did as the Lord had commanded Moses. ¹⁰ No prophet has arisen again in Israel like Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face. ¹¹ He was unparalleled for all the signs and wonders the Lord sent him to do against the land of Egypt—to Pharaoh, to all his officials, and to all his land— ¹² and for all the mighty acts of power and terrifying deeds that Moses performed in the sight of all Israel.

Deuteronomy 33:1-29

How does Moses begin and end his blessings for the people of Israel? (See vs. 1-3, 26-29).

Write a brief description of the blessing given to each tribe (listed oldest to youngest). Also compare these blessings with those given by Jacob to his sons at the end of his life (Genesis 49):

Reuben: _____

Simeon: _____

Levi: _____

Judah: _____

Dan: _____

Naphtali: _____

Gad: _____

Asher: _____

Issachar: _____

Zebulun: _____

Joseph: _____

Benjamin: _____

What do you wonder about or notice from this list of blessings?

What do Moses' words about God and His blessings to the tribes teach us about the character of God, particularly in light of the many warnings Moses has given the people about rebelling against Him?

Consider verse 3. How do these verses encourage or challenge you? How are you experiencing God's love for you today?

Deuteronomy 34:1-12

What do we learn about the end of Moses' life from these verses?

Why do you think God hid the location of Moses' grave?

How would you summarize the legacy of Moses' leadership? Why does his leadership stand out? How might the example of Moses remind you of the life of Christ?

Reflections:

The Song of Moses from Deuteronomy 32 is filled with warnings and prophetic words about Israel's future rebellion, but Moses' final words to the people in Deuteronomy 33 are filled with grace and mercy. God's blessing on Israel (also called Jeshurun in verses 5 and 26) will continue because God has chosen this people as His own and made a covenant with them. These words of blessing from Moses just before his death also indicate to us the great love he held for Israel. In spite of the challenges he faced over forty years as their leader and the knowledge that Israel will walk away from God again in the future, Moses ends his leadership of Israel with words of comfort and strength, reminding the people of God's love and care for them.

The specific blessings Moses gives to the tribes of Israel is similar to the blessing Jacob (also called Israel) gave his sons prior to his own death (see Genesis 49). Moses' blessings matched those given by Jacob, which may not be surprising since Moses is also the author of Genesis where Jacob's blessings are recorded. Each tribe except Simeon is mentioned in these blessings, and the results of these blessings offered by God through Moses can be seen by looking more deeply at what Scripture tells us about Israel's years in the Promised Land.

Moses ends these blessings with a reminder to Israel of God's love for them as evidenced by His help, His protection, and His provision. Above all, Moses points Israel to the sufficiency and faithfulness of God and the blessing of Israel to be chosen by Him. With his message completed, God graciously allowed Moses to climb the mountain and view the land before his death. In the same way that God would prove faithful to Israel, God was faithful to Moses to the end of his days, and blessed him with this view before welcoming Moses home.

God worked through Moses to deliver Israel from slavery in Egypt to the riches of the Promised Land. In this way, Moses foreshadows Jesus Christ who delivers people from slavery to sin into abundant life in Him. God demonstrated His faithfulness and sovereignty to Moses by empowering him to lead the people through those difficult wilderness years and by speaking to Moses "face to face, as one speaks to a friend" (Exodus 33:11). Moses lived his life as an imperfect but faithful servant to the Lord who regularly spent time in His presence. Moses ended his life alone with his sovereign God, viewing the Promised Land stretched before him, in full confidence that the faithful God who made the covenant with Israel could be trusted to keep His word.



Bible Study Resources

Riverview Resources

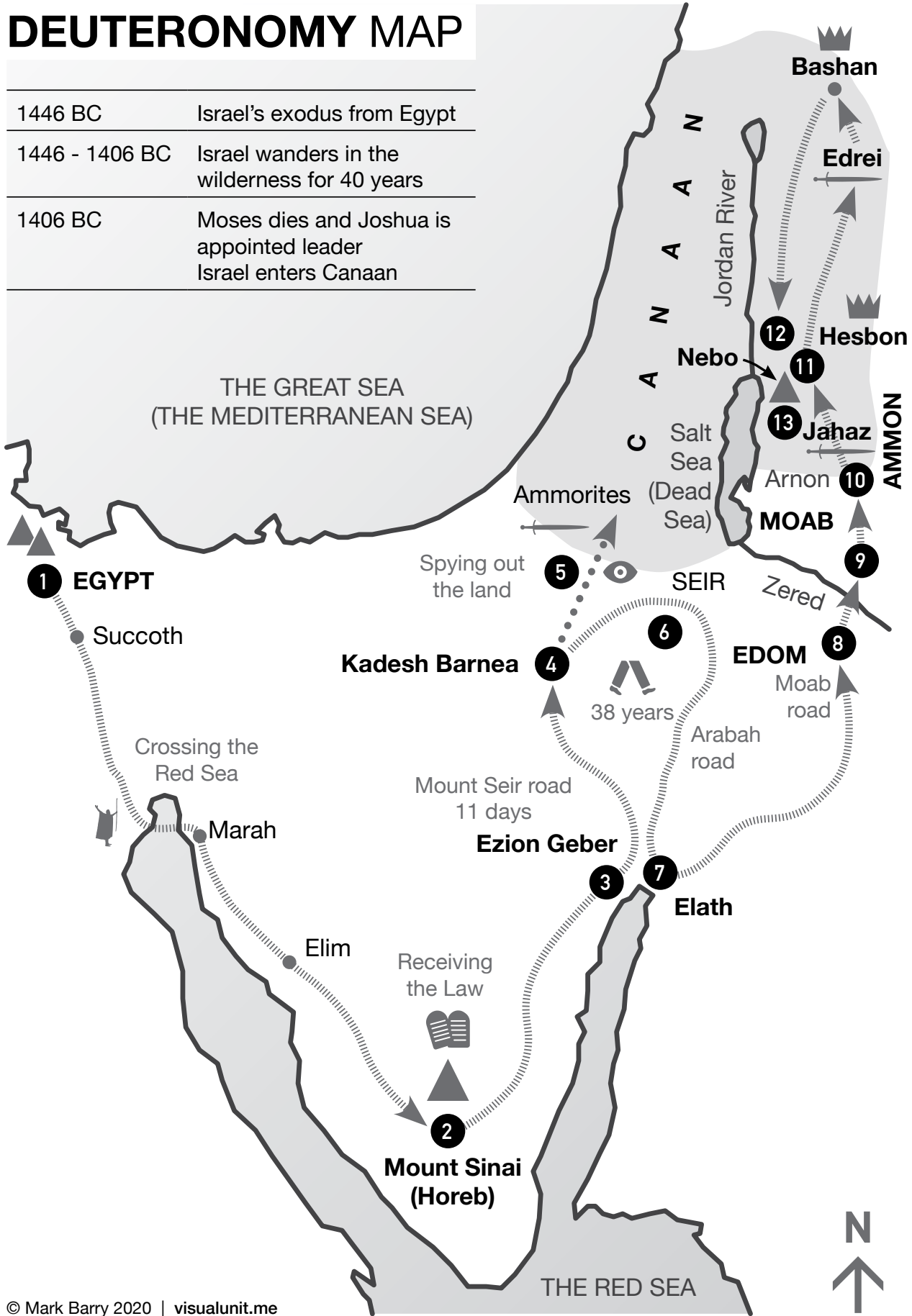
- **Introduction to Inductive Bible Study** - rivchurch.com/inductivebiblestudy
a short video outlining how we approach studying the Bible. (15 minutes)
- **Reading the Bible Normally** - rivchurch.com/readingthebiblenormally
a one-page document outlining how we approach studying the Bible.
- **Comprehension Questions** - rivchurch.com/biblecomprehensionquestions
strategies to help you consider what the Bible says.
- **Five Ws Study Guide** - rivchurch.com/fivewstudyguide
a list of questions to get you started.
- **Riverview's Messages** - rivchurch.com/watch/messages
A catalog of current and past messages from Riverview Church.
Sort by series, speaker, or location.
- **Online Classes** - rivchurch.com/watch/online-classes
Three on-demand classes to get you plugged into Riverview (Membership Class), familiar with the Bible (Bible Basics), and studying the Bible (Interpreting the Bible Normally).

Other Resources

- **CSB Study Bible**
- **Bible Gateway** - biblegateway.com
A searchable online Bible with over 200 translations and audio versions.
- **Interlinear Bible** - biblehub.com/interlinear
Greek and Hebrew with Concordance
- **BibleRef** - bible-ref.com
Free online Bible commentary
- **The Bible Project YouTube channel** - youtube.com/user/jointhebibleproject
Short, animated videos that help you better understand the Bible.
- **Got Questions? website** - gotquestions.org
A searchable resource of over 7,600 answers to frequently asked Bible questions.
- *Women of the Word: How to Study the Bible with Both Our Hearts and Our Minds*
by Jen Wilkin
- *Grasping God's Word: A Hands-On Approach to Reading, Interpreting, and Applying the Bible*
by Scott Duvall & Daniel Hayes
- *The Old Testament Law for the Life of the Church: Reading the Torah in the Light of Christ*
by Richard E. Averbeck

DEUTERONOMY MAP

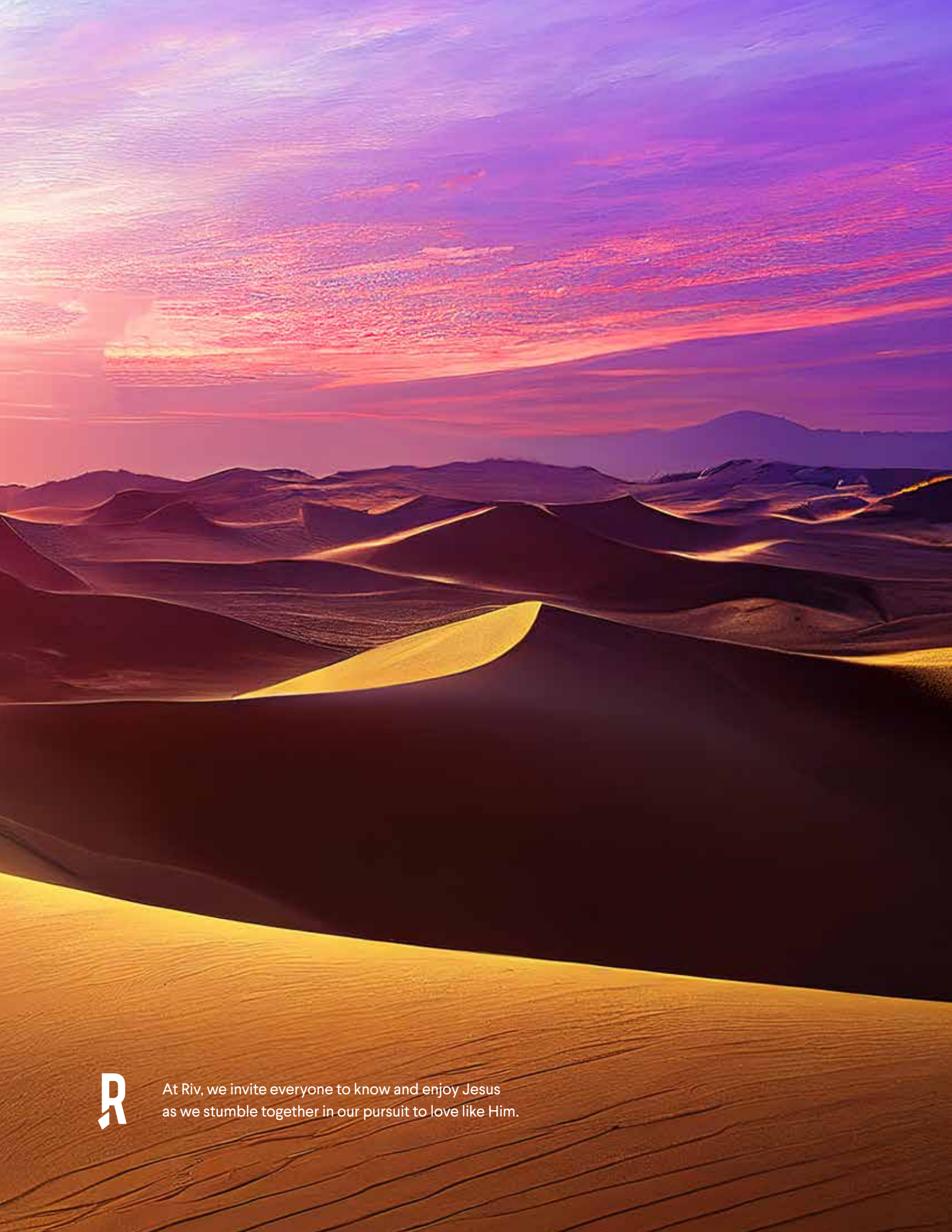
1446 BC	Israel's exodus from Egypt
1446 - 1406 BC	Israel wanders in the wilderness for 40 years
1406 BC	Moses dies and Joshua is appointed leader Israel enters Canaan



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DEUTERONOMY MAP | KEY

1. **Egypt:** God saves Israel out of slavery in Egypt and leads them to Mount Sinai (Horeb).
2. **Mount Sinai (Horeb):** God gives Israel the law through Moses and commands Israel to head to Canaan and take the land he promised to their forefathers (1:6-8).
3. **Mount Seir road:** Israel make the 11-day trek from Horeb to Kadesh Barnea (1:2,19). Moses commands Israel to take the land (1:20-21).
4. **Kadesh Barnea:** Israel sends spies to scope out the land and they return with news of its goodness *and* its giant inhabitants. Israel rebels against God and refuses to enter the land (1:22-33). God swears that no living adult (except Joshua) will enter the land (1:34-40).
5. Israel defiantly marches into the hill country of the Amorites and is soundly beaten back, camping in Kadesh for many days (1:41-45).
6. **Seir | Arabah road:** Israel wanders around the hill country of Seir back towards the Red Sea and along the Arabah road for many years (2:1; 2:14).
7. **Elath | Moab road:** God instructs Israel to head back north peacefully past the descendants of Esau (Edom) from Elath and Ezion Geber along the Moab road (2:2-8).
8. **Zered:** God instructs Israel to travel peacefully past the Moabites and across the Zered Valley. 38 years have now passed since leaving Kadesh Barnea and the whole generation of fighting men has died (2:9,13-14).
9. **Moab:** God commands Israel to leave Moab and travel peacefully past the Ammonites (2:16-19).
10. **Arnon Gorge | Jahaz:** Israel sets out across the Arnon Gorge and seek to make peace with Sihon the Amorite (King of Heshbon). However, he meets them for battle at Jahaz, where his army is completely defeated and all his cities taken (2:24-37).
11. **Hesbon | Edrei:** As Israel heads from Hesbon towards Bashan, Og the Amorite (King of Bashan) meets them for battle at Edrei, where his army is also defeated and all his cities taken as well (3:1-10).
12. **Beth Peor:** After all the land East of the Jordan is divided between the tribes of Reuben, Gad and Manasseh (3:12-13), Israel camps in the valley near Beth Peor (3:29). Here Moses reminds Israel of her past, before renewing the covenant with God, as they prepare to enter the land without him.
13. **Mount Nebo:** After Moses looks to Israel's future and blesses the tribes, he climbs Mount Nebo to see the promised land with his own eyes, before he dies (34:1-5).



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as we stumble together in our pursuit to love like Him.